00025509

THE
ASIATIC SOCIETY OF BOMBAY
Town Hall, Bombay.

00025509

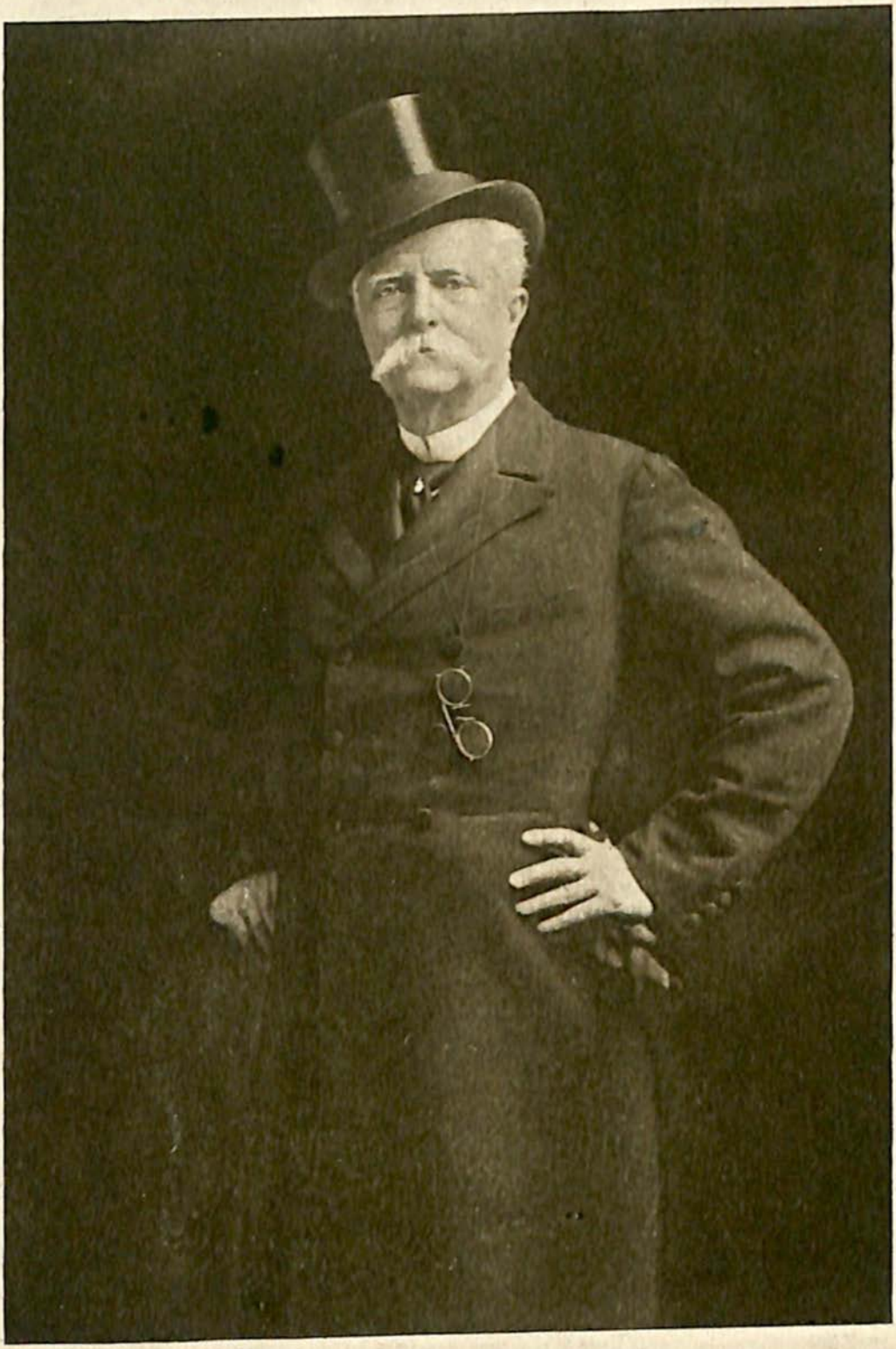
Digitized with financial assistance from

H T Parekh
FOUNDATION

An Initiative by
HDFC
WITH YOU, RIGHT THROUGH

on 15 October, 2018

MEMORIES



The Author.

Photographed by Furley Lewis Esq.

Memories. : : *By*

Lord Redesdale, G.C.V.O., K.C.B.

With two photogravure plates and 16 other illustrations

B 811

LIBRARY OF THE BOMBAY BRANCH OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY

25509

VOL. I

LONDON: HUTCHINSON & CO.
PATERNOSTER ROW 1915

25509

TO MY WIFE AND CHILDREN,

FOR WHOM THESE

MEMORIES OF MANY YEARS HAVE BEEN RECORDED

I DEDICATE MY BOOK

PREFACE

Now that the midnight of life is at hand, before the last chime of the curfew must ring out, I have been busying myself in writing down memories of the people who brightened its morning, its noon and its evening. It was my fate long ago to be associated with men older, sometimes much older, than myself, and so it happens that few indeed of the friends of my early manhood are now left. Except where it is absolutely necessary in order to tell the rest of my tale, I have not dealt with the living. To praise them might seem sycophantic, to blame them an impertinence. It would be overbold in me to write a chronicle of my own days were I not able to say with Horace :

> " tamen me
> Cum magnis vixisse invita fatebitur usque
> Invidia."

My life, indeed, has been largely spent amongst men who in many lands have made the history of their time. The story of their public achievements is, or will be, written in the annals of their countries. The story of their private lives is often unknown to, and therefore put on one side by, their biographers. To rescue from oblivion here and there some intimate feature, some petty detail which may help to make known the real personalities of such men—perhaps to remove a wrong impression—is the humble object of this book, and it is to the shades of those who did so much for me that I offer it as a grateful tribute.

I HAVE to thank Sir Ernest Satow for allowing me to check by his own journals and records what I have written about the adventurous years which we spent together in Japan. I must also express my gratitude to Mr. Edmund Gosse for much encouragement and patient advice—without his sympathy these pages would hardly have seen the light. To the Editor of the *National Review* I am indebted for permission to reproduce an article which has appeared in his pages. Similar thanks for the use of an article on Lord Lyons in the *Candid Review* are due to Mr. Gibson Bowles.

CONTENTS

VOL. I

CHAP.		PAGE
I.	The Cradle and the Race	1
II.	Frankfort—Paris—Trouville	30
III.	Eton	50
IV.	Summer Holidays	78
V.	Wales and Oxford	90
VI.	The F. O.	108
VII.	Lord Lyons	131
VIII.	The Wedding of the Prince of Wales	161
IX.	My Brother. Music and the Drama	189
X.	Russia	204
XI.	The Winter of 1863–1864	232
XII.	Through the Winter	246
XIII.	Moscow	287
XIV.	The First Call of the East	307
XV.	China in 1865–1866	328
XVI.	Peking	343
XVII.	Peking	356
XVIII.	Japan	373
XIX.	The Shōgun or Tycoon	386

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

VOL. I

THE AUTHOR (*photogravure*) . . . . . *Frontispiece*
Photograph by Furley Lewis, Esq.

PORTRAIT IN MEMORY OF BERTRAM ASHBURNHAM . . *Facing page* 2
From Gwillim's Heraldry.

THE RUINS OF MITFORD CASTLE . . . . . ,, ,, 4
From a drawing, dated August, 1769, by J. Mitford (Lord Redesdale).

WILLIAM MITFORD . . . . . ,, ,, 14
From an oil painting by John Jackson, R.A.

THE ASHBURNHAM FAMILY . . . . . ,, ,, 26

EDWARD CRAVEN HAWTREY, D.D., ETON COLLEGE . ,, ,, 52
A sketch by a sixth form boy.

FIRE-PLACE IN EVANS' HOUSE . . . . . ,, ,, 64
From a water-colour sketch by W. Evans.

MARIO . . . . . ,, ,, 192
By Lord Leighton, P.R.A.

EMBASSY HOUSE, ST. PETERSBURG . . . . . ,, ,, 206
From a water-colour drawing by Charlemagne, 1864.

THE DEAD EMPEROR NICHOLAS I. . . . . ,, ,, 252

THE EMPEROR ALEXANDER II. . . . . ,, ,, 264
From a sketch by Zichy.

THE EMPEROR ALEXANDER II. . . . . ,, ,, 272
From a sketch by Zichy.

MEMORIES

CHAPTER I

THE CRADLE AND THE RACE

Nam genus et proavos et quæ non fecimus ipsi,
Vix ea nostra voco.

OF course it was not good taste in Ajax to brag so loudly of being the great-grandson of Jupiter, but then Ulysses need not have snubbed him so fiercely, and then gone on to show how he, too, was god-born, but on the mother's side as well as on the father's. Nor was it quite consistent in Ovid, who struggled so proudly for his privileges as *eques* in the theatre, to clothe these Socialist sentiments in a pair of hexameter lines; but then, in spite of that little flirtation with a naughty Princess, which caused his banishment, Ovid was a Radical and a poet, which gave him a double claim to inconsistency.

The sentiment is, as it seems to me, utterly false and untrue to the very nature of man. From the earliest times, and even in the most savage races, men have been proud of such ancestry as they could lay claim to, and many a poor peasant loves to tell you that he is living in the cottage that his forebears have held for generations. Pride of Race and Pride of Country go hand-in-hand as two forms of Patriotism.

In 1862 poor Laurence Oliphant and I—he, the most charming of companions, just beginning to be bitten by mysticism—were travelling together on the Continent. He was still suffering from the cruel wounds which he received in the night attack

by Rônins on the Legation at Yedo in 1861. He had been ordered to drink the iron waters of Spa, and I agreed to go with him for my summer holiday. The first evening at the table d'hôte dinner, I sat next to a very agreeable gentleman with whom I speedily made friends. After about half an hour's talk he asked my name. I told him who I was. "Dear me," he said, "if you are the son of Mr. Mitford of Exbury and Lady Georgina Ashburnham, you are descended from perhaps the two oldest Saxon families in England. Sir, you are a very remarkable person." I felt as Whistler, in his quaint way, told me that he did when Carlyle used the same words to him, "That that was about what was the matter with me!" and when I asked who was my genealogical acquaintance, he turned out to be no less an authority than Sir Bernard Burke.

But in matter of genealogy, as in all others, there are iconoclasts, and now come people of much learning, who declare that the Saxon Mitfords are really Norman Bertrams, and that the famous Ashburnhams, "of stupendous antiquity," are the descendants of a Norman family who were Counts of Eu—in Domesday Book variously called Estriels, Escriol, Criol, Crieul, or Anglicized as Kiriell, and even Cruel. That after all these centuries, and after such countless marriages as must have taken place in them, so curious an animal as a man of pure Saxon blood, or, indeed, of any pure blood, should still be in existence is, of course, an impossibility. It may be rank nonsense to talk of the Mitfords and the Ashburnhams as two of the oldest Saxon families in England, when there can be no such families, but there can be no doubt that they are both of very great antiquity.

Of the Ashburnhams old Fuller says, "My poor and plaine pen is willing though unable to add any lustre to this family of stupendous antiquitie." According to Francis Thynne, a herald of Queen Elizabeth's time, "Bertram Ashburnham, a Baron of Kent, was Constable of Dover Castle in 1066; which Bertram was beheaded by William the Conqueror because he did so valiantly defend the same against the Duke of Normandy." This is quoted by the Duchess of Cleveland in her "Battle Abbey Roll," and she then labours with all her might to demolish the whole story.

Edw. Le Davis sculp
This Portraiture is in memory of Bertram
who in the tyme of King Harold was
of Dover and Sheruff of the said County.
at the Landing of William the Conqueror, King
him a Letter to raise all the force under
when the King came vp to oppose ỹ Conqueror;
Comand in the Battle) receiued soe many
And since which tyme (through the mercy of
euer since continued at Ashburnham aforesaid.
Ashburnham of Ashburnham in Sussex,
Warden of the Cinqueports, Constable
and being a person in soe great power
Harold (who was then in the North) sent
his Comand to withstand the Invador. And
the said Bertram (who had an eminent
wounds that soon after he dyed thereof
god the Said family (in a direct male line) have
and are the present possessors thereof.

PORTRAIT IN MEMORY OF BERTRAM ASHBURNHAM, LORD WARDEN OF THE CINQUE PORTS IN KING HAROLD'S TIME.

From Gwillim's Heraldry.

Gwillim's " Heraldry," however, takes the other view, and makes out that the second holder of the office of Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports was this same Bertram Ashburnham, and that it was he who, on behalf of the King, raised the troops to resist the invasion, Harold himself being away engaged in quelling a rebellion in the North. " Since which time until now, by the grace of God, there hath not been wanting an Ashburnham of Ashburnham in Sussex."

Gwillim has a curious engraving of a portrait " in memory of " this hero in seventeenth-century armour, and the tradition in the family is that it was John Ashburnham, King Charles the First's gentleman, who sat for this very grim effigy. Then there is another story, for which I know not the authority, if, indeed, there be any, to the effect that Bertram Ashburnham defended the Castle so stoutly that William made terms with him and raised the siege, allowing the Saxon to name his own conditions, which were that he and his men should leave with all the honours of war, and that the law of gavelkind should obtain in Kent for all time. This brave tale, I am afraid, must be dismissed as moonshine.

So there is much complication, but on one point all the authorities are agreed, and that is the marriage of the Norman knight, Bertram, with the Saxon heiress of Mitford; so far as that goes, if we may not call ourselves a Saxon family, our Saxon descent is not denied to us.

About two miles to the west of Morpeth, on a spot romantic enough to inspire a poet's dream, fair enough for a painter to linger over with a lover's delight, stand the ruins of the old Saxon castle of Mitford. That is the Cradle of our Race. The keep, battered by storms of war and weather, rises on a rocky eminence to the south of the river Wansbeck,* close to the point where the two fords of the Wansbeck and the Font meet. It was from this meeting that the Castle and village took their name,† just as Coblenz did from the *confluentiæ* of Rhine and Moselle. The rivers of

* The name Wansbeck is derived from " want," the old English word for a mole: the beck or stream of the mole. The word, by the by, is still alive in Gloucestershire, where a molehill is an " unt-yeave."

† Midford=between the fords.

Northumberland, tearing their way through the rocks, between banks fringed with the most picturesque vegetation, overhanging trees, shrubs, ferns, docks, and all the fairy-like greenery which they wear with such grace, are the glory of that part of the country. Such streams as the Wansbeck and the Coquet are a haunting memory.

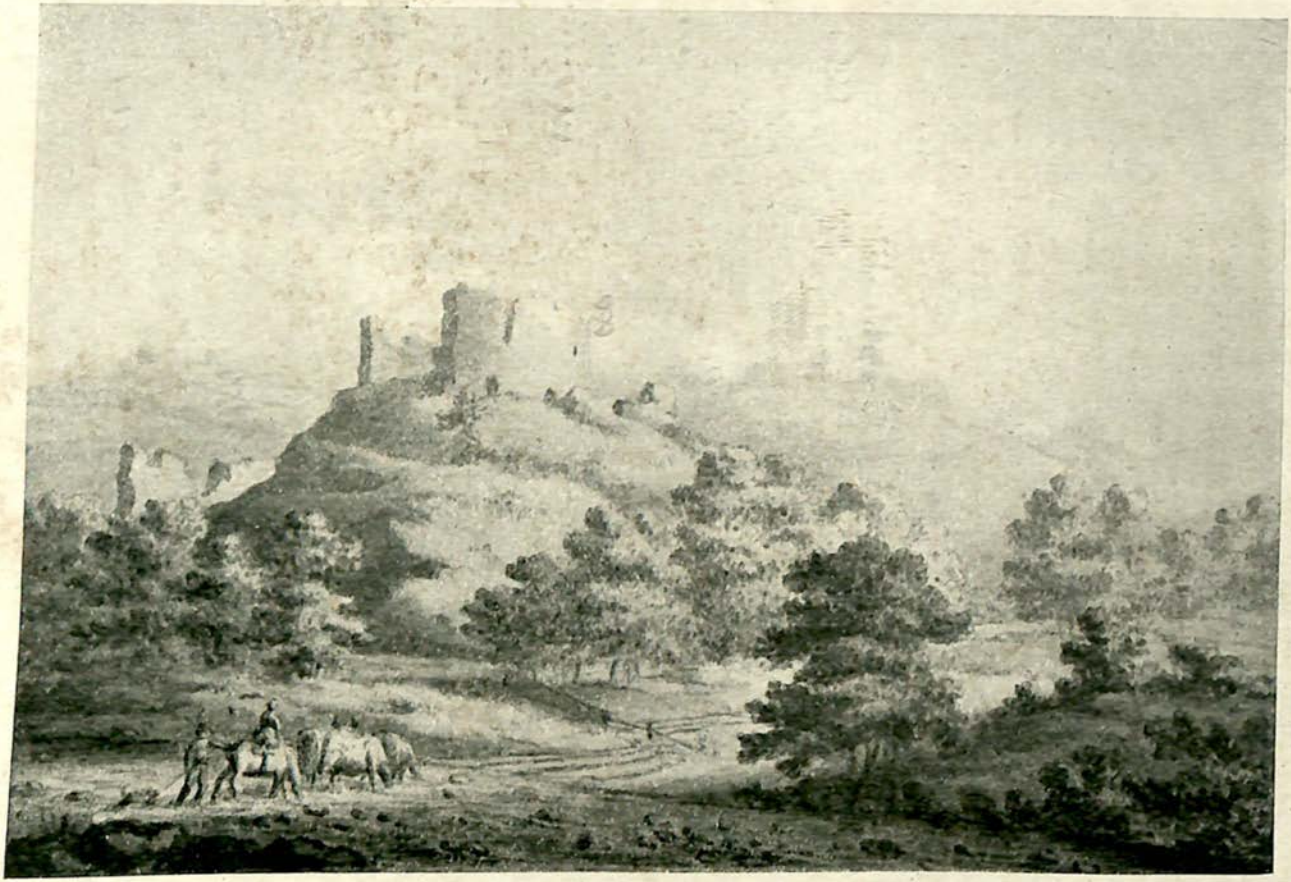
Not even the most audaciously inventive of antiquaries has, so far as I know, been brave enough to fix the date of the Castle's building; all that can be said is that it is very old. Burke, on the authority of the "Durham Booke," tells the story how a certain "Robert Mitford, Esq., carried an old writeing to produce at Durham upon some occasion, by wch one of ye ancestors of Mitfords, of Mitford, in ye time of K. Edwd. ye Confessor, did assure his wife's joynture out of Lands in Mitford, wch writeing Sir Joseph Craddock saw and attests it under the hand, but is since embezzled and lost." That, since the document is lost, is but a weak foundation upon which to base a belief. The tale, however, must be true, for William the Conqueror's advent followed almost immediately upon the death of King Edward, and that the Castle was at the time of the Conquest in the possession of Sir John de Mitford is a fact. Beyond that time we must be content to leave the family history lost in the clouds.

Even so, the story is old enough, and we may well be proud of our old cousin Edward Mitford, the head of the family, who fulfilled more than his century of life in 1911, and died on the property and in sight of the ruined Castle which belonged to our ancestors some nine hundred years ago.

Among the knights who fought at Hastings in the train of William the Conqueror were two brothers, Sir Robert* and Sir William Bertram. "Robert Bertram ki estoit tort" (crooked) was Lord of Briquebec, near Valognes, a barony consisting of forty knights' fees, which is said to have taken its name from Brico, a Norwegian Viking, who was the ancestor of the Bertram family.† It was the well-known policy of the Conqueror to pacify England and

* Sir Robert Bertram's name is given as Richard in Burke's "Landed Gentry," where it is further said that he was a son of the Lord of Dignam in Normandy.

† The Duchess of Cleveland's "Battle Abbey Roll."



THE RUINS OF MITFORD CASTLE, NEAR MORPETH, NORTHUMBERLAND.

From a drawing, dated August, 1769, by J. Mitford (Lord Redesdale), d. August, 1769.

consolidate his power by promoting or even making up marriages between his followers and the Saxons whom they had conquered—especially did this judicious match-making seem to be desirable where there was an heiress to be won. At the time of the Conquest, Sir John de Mitford, who owned the Castle and Barony of Mitford, had no son. His only daughter, Sibella, was his heiress, and between her and Sir Robert Bertram a marriage was arranged and carried into effect.

I wonder what sort of a home it made, this union between the Saxon girl, of whom I like to believe that she was as beautiful as the Lady Rowena, and the Norman warrior? Was it altogether a *mariage de convenance?* Was Sibella forced into it, or might he have lighted just the least little spark of love in her breast?—and when once they were married, did she live happily with her crooked knight? These crook-backed men are apt to have very insinuating ways; we all know how Richard the Third, when he made love to Lady Anne, so flattered and coaxed that her

> woman's heart
> Grossly grew captive to his honey words,

and in my early diplomatic days, I had a colleague at a certain Embassy, who, though crooked as Pope himself, was declared by all women to be irresistible. How grateful, by the bye, we ought to be for that one and only record "qui estoit tort," just three words which give to the old story of Sibella a touch perfectly human and real, such as a hundred blazing tales of deeds of derring-do, sung by minstrels or recorded by chroniclers, could never have conveyed. The crook must have been true, it could hardly have been invented. Since walls have ears, what a pity it is that stones have not tongues: these old ruins could teach us so much about the lives that they harboured, lessons which one does so long to learn.

These Bertrams must have been men of no little importance in their generations. The two heroes of Hastings evidently made their mark, and later on there is some reason to suppose that one, at any rate, of the family, perhaps more, joined in one or other of the Crusades. For in some excavations which were made among the ruins of the Castle in the middle of the nineteenth century,

the workmen came upon a tiny piece of that serpentine marble which the Crusaders were wont to bring home from the Holy Land to be set in the altars of their chapels; the relic was found on the spot where the chapel is supposed to have stood. As should beseem Crusaders, the Bertrams were good and loyal servants of the Church: a pious Bertram it was that founded or endowed the Augustine Priory of Brinkbourne in the reign of Henry the First.

Sir Roger de Bertram joined the insurrection of the Barons against King John, and it cost him dear, for in retaliation his castle was seized and his town of Mitford destroyed with fire and sword by the savage Flemish hordes who then devastated Northumberland as the auxiliaries of the King.* In the year 1215, then, Mitford Castle was in the hands of the Crown, and two years later Alexander of Scotland, who had invaded England at the instigation of France, laid siege to it with his whole army, but he was beaten off, and went back to Scotland none the richer for his venture. King John granted the Castle to Philip de Ulcoves, but in the following reign it was restored to the Bertrams by Henry the Third.

The next notable Bertram was that Sir Roger who, with other northern Barons, marched into Scotland in 1258 to rescue the young King of the Scots, Henry the Third's son-in-law; but he got into trouble, for six years later he was one of the insurgents in the Barons' War, was taken prisoner at Northampton, and the Castle and Barony were once more forfeited and alienated from his descendants for four hundred years. He seems, indeed, to have speedily made his peace with the King, for in 1264 he was summoned to Parliament as Baron Bertram—but Mitford knew him no more.† This Sir Roger was succeeded by his son, who had only one daughter, and the Barony fell into abeyance between the Fitzwilliams, Darcys and Penulburys, the representatives of his three sisters.

The learned labours of antiquaries and pedigree-mongers have so confused the story of the younger branch of the Bertrams, the Lords of Bothal, that it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to make head or tail of their several statements. It is the more

* The Duchess of Cleveland's "Battle Abbey Roll."

† "Battle Abbey Roll" *ut supra.*

provoking in that it is from them that we, the Mitfords of the present day, are descended. From them also the Dukes of Portland, through a maternal ancestress, have inherited Bothal Castle.

In the " Battle Abbey Roll " of the Duchess of Cleveland, it is stated that William de Bertram, who founded Brinkbourne Priory, married a daughter of Guy de Baliol by whom he had two sons, Roger, Baron of Mitford, and Richard, the ancestor of the Lords of Bothal, who held that Barony by the service of three knights' fees. This is, I believe, the more probably correct story, and it comes into line with the evidence of the " Newminster Abbey Register Booke," which makes the inheritance descend to the Dukes of Portland from the Lady Sibella, wife of the first Lord Bertram.

That Bothal should have been held by Sir William (sometimes called Sir Richard) Bertram, the brother of the first Lord Bertram, as some have maintained, is worthy of no credence. Why should an important portion of Sibella de Mitford's property have gone to her husband's younger brother ?

Burke, in his " Landed Gentry," anxious, probably, to prove a Saxon descent from father to son, appears to wipe out all the Bertrams in the middle of the fourteenth century, and makes Mitford (the town or village, not the Castle and Barony, which were forfeited) descend to Sir John de Mitford, tenth in succession to Matthew, the younger brother of the Sir John who was the father of Sibella. That we shall see is quite apocryphal, for when the elder branch of the Bertrams came to an end in 1311, the younger branch continued to flourish at Bothal, and soon adopted the name of Mitford, taking their patronymic from the property which the family had then held for two and a half centuries.

It was to that branch that the famous Hermit of Warkworth belonged, whose tragic story was woven into a poem by Dr. Johnson's friend, Bishop Percy of Dromore, who collected the " Reliques of Ancient Poetry." The poem, very poor stuff, was published separately some years after the " Reliques."

This Bertram was in love with a neighbouring Lady Isabel de Widdrington, and she returned his love, " but like a true daughter of

> ' These northern counties here
> Whose word is snaffle, spur and spear,'

she chose to put his mettle to the test before giving him her hand. She sent him a helmet as her love-token, desiring him to try its temper 'wherever blows fell sharpest;' and Bertram, obedient to her behest, rode with his brother-in-arms, Lord Percy, on a raid into Scotland, where he was wounded nearly to the death in a desperate fray. The tidings were brought to Isabel, who, struck with terror and remorse, at once set out to go to him, but on her way was seized by some prowling moss-troopers, and carried off to one of their secret fastnesses beyond the border. Thus when at the downfall of the night her rescued Knight was carried home on the shields of his followers, he found his lady gone, and all traces of her lost. He made a vow never to rest till he had found her, and his brother promised to help him in the quest. As soon as his health permitted, they went forth together in a humble disguise, and the better to conduct their search, agreed to separate, the brother going northwards and Bertram himself to the west. For many weary days and weeks he wandered over moss and moor in vain; till at length when he had almost lost heart, a compassionate pilgrim directed him to a distant peel-tower in which a lady's voice had been heard lamenting.

Bertram found the place, and recognized the voice; but watched the tower for two successive nights without obtaining a glimpse of his Isabel. On the third night, however, that he lay crouched in his hiding-place, he saw her descend a ladder of ropes thrown from an upper window, assisted by a man muffled up in a cloak, who bore her across the little stream and led her away, clinging fondly to his arm. Bertram, maddened at the sight, rushed after them with his naked sword, and attacked his rival, who defended himself manfully; but after a stubborn conflict, Bertram succeeded in bringing him to the ground, and stabbed him to the heart, with the words, 'Die, traitor!' Then, when she heard his voice the wretched Isabel for the first time knew who he was, and sprang forward to arrest the blow, shrieking, 'It is thy brother!' She was too late, for the deed was done, and in the struggle to throw herself between them, she slipped against Bertram's sword, and fell pierced, by his brother's side.

For that night's bloody tragedy the unhappy Bertram did penance

to the end of his days. He renounced every tie that bound him to the world. His sword and spear were hung up in his hall, his inheritance passed on to others and his goods were given to the poor, while he himself, clad in monastic garb, took refuge in the rocky recesses of Coquetdale, near Warkworth Castle. No more ideal retreat could be devised for an anchorite than this lovely, sequestered glen, where the hurrying Coquet stays its troubled current beneath precipitous cliffs, clothed with trees that spring from every chink and crevice of the stone ; and from an overhanging grove of stately oaks above, a runlet of the purest water comes rippling down.

Here his dwelling-place, scooped out of the living rock, remains almost as perfect as when he left it. It can only be reached from the river by a long flight of steps. Over the entrance linger the traces of the original inscription, '*Sunt mihi lachrymæ meæ cibo interdiu et noctu.*' The first cell is a miniature chapel, complete in all its details, with a raised altar at the east end ; and on a recessed altar tomb beside it is the effigy of a woman, very delicately designed, but now broken and timeworn, lying with her head towards the east, and her arms slightly raised, showing that her hands have been folded in prayer. At her feet in a niche cut in the stone, the figure of the Hermit kneels in eternal penitence, his head resting on his hand. Beyond this, reached through a doorway, bearing on a shield the Crucifixion and the emblems of the Passion, is a still smaller oratory, used by the Hermit as a sleeping-place ; with a similar altar at the farther end, and near it a narrow ledge hewn out of the rock for his couch.

Neither by night nor by day did he ever lose sight of the beloved effigy in the adjoining chapel ; for at the altar a window is contrived through which he could see it as he knelt at his devotions ; and when lying on his bed, a niche cut slantwise through the partition wall still enabled him to rest his faithful eyes upon it. No one knows for how many sorrowful years he lived here in penance and contrition, nor when death came to his release.

Such is the touching story of the Hermit of Warkworth, who was of our blood, as it is related in the " Battle Abbey Roll " which I have so often quoted.

Bertram's friend, Lord Percy, kept his memory green by paying

for Masses to be sung in the Chapel, and the allowance for the purpose was continued until the Suppression of the Monasteries, and according to Hutchinson, " the patent is extant which was granted to the last hermit in 1532 by the Sixth Earl of Northumberland."

* * * * * * *

So the elder branch of the Bertrams disappeared in 1311, and with them the name, for the Lords of Bothal speedily called themselves de Mitford, which from that time forth became the family patronymic. " Happy the minister who does not make history " is an old saying which may well be applied to families, for if in the centuries during which our people have been Lords of Mitford, though they produced no great soldier, no great statesman, no Raleigh, no Drake, no Frobisher, no Sir Thomas More, no King's favourite, at any rate they kept their heads upon their shoulders. Political ambition was apt to be a very deadly disease, and they had it not. They were contented to live held in respect by their neighbours, to act as high sheriffs when called upon to do so, and sometimes to represent their county in Parliament.

Perhaps the most distinguished of these ancestors of ours was Sir John de Mitford, who was Knight of the Shire for Northumberland in various Parliaments during the reigns of King Edward the Third, King Richard the Second and King Henry the Fourth. He was High Sheriff for two years, and acted as Commissioner with John Widdrington and Gerald Heron to tender the Oath of Allegiance to the King of Scotland. On the 20th of May, 1369, at Newton Hall, he received by deed of feoffment from David Strathbolgi, Second Earl of Athol, a grant of all his lands and tenements in the Ville of Molesden, to be holden of the grantor and his descendants by the annual payment of sixpence. It has been said that this transfer led to the adoption of the three moles as the family arms, but our family tradition, which I believe to be well founded, is that they were of much older date and taken from the Want's Beck, the mole's stream, as was the name of Molesden itself. Sir John was in 1386 Keeper of the Seal to Edward Duke of York for the Liberty of Tyndale.

On his death he was succeeded by his elder son William, who

was, like his father, Knight of the Shire and High Sheriff in Henry the Fifth's reign. Then followed his son John, a pious benefactor of the Church, living, no doubt, in the sweetest odour of sanctity, who granted tenements in Newcastle to the Church of St. Nicholas, and gave lands in Echewicke to the Abbot and Convent of Newminster, to pray for his soul and the souls of his ancestors. He died in the sixteenth year of the reign of King Henry the Sixth. The following three Lords of the Manor, Thomas, Bertram and Cawen, were inconspicuous persons, and there is nothing to be said of our forebears until we come to Cuthbert, who in the sixth year of Edward the Sixth was with Anthony Mitford of Ponteland, Commissioner for the inclosure of the Middle Marches. This said Anthony was a rogue. Cuthbert Mitford by his first wife, Ann, daughter of one Wallis of Akeild, had one son, Robert, and three daughters : failing that son Robert, Anthony of Ponteland would become Lord of the Manor of Mitford and heir to all Cuthbert's estate. To achieve this end he hatched a plot, seeking to prove that there had been no marriage between Cuthbert and Ann Wallis, and that in consequence Robert was illegitimate.

He contrived to have his contention entered in the Harleian MSS., and to have Robert described as *nothus natus*—base-born, but when he presented the document at the Heralds' College, it proved to be signed only by himself. On investigation, the lie was nailed to the counter, Robert's legitimacy was fully proved, and his arms were certified without a difference. He was what would be looked upon in these days as a person of rather lax opinions and was " presented " at the Archdeacon's Visitations " for sufferinge divers persons to eate, drinke and play atte cardes in time of eveninge praier." In spite of the Archidiaconal thunders, he lived through the reigns of Queen Elizabeth and King James, and died in the first year of King Charles the First's reign at the good old age of eighty-eight.

He was succeeded by his grandson Robert, both of whose parents had died in his infancy on the same day. This Robert is an ancestor of special interest for us. In the first place it was to him that King Charles the Second restored by grant the Castle and royalties of Mitford, which had been forfeit in punishment of Roger Bertram's

treason by King Henry the Third in 1264, and secondly it is from his third son, John, who left the old home to seek his fortune as a merchant in London, that we, the Mitfords, formerly of Exbury, now of Batsford, are descended. The Mitfords of Pitshill are descended from William, who was a great-grandson of the Robert of Charles the Second's time.

The portraits of Robert Mitford and Philadelphia Wharton, his wife, are at Batsford. The contemporary frame of her picture is surrounded by carved oak leaves and acorns in memory of the famous escape of the King, and to denote her loyalty to his cause.

Let us linger for a few more moments among the ruins of the old Cradle of our Race. In the dark centuries, when even if there was no actual war between England and Scotland, there was almost continuous fighting between the fierce clans on both sides, feuds and raids and cattle-lifting were the salt of northern life; hatred was a profession, revenge the accomplishment of a gentleman. The border castles were seldom at rest, and Mitford fared no better than its neighbours.

Dreaming on a summer's day within the, to us, sacred precincts, one can almost hear the grey walls ringing with the music of sword, spear and battle-axe clashing upon hauberk and breast-plate—the shouts of the fighting men mad with the lust of blood—clouds of arrows rattling like hail against the battlements should a head show itself. The borderers were gay men at fighting, and the Scots ever met with a hot welcome.

After the treason of Sir Roger Bertram in 1264, wild men succeeded one another in the ownership of the Castle. In the year 1316 it was the home of a freebooter of the pattern of the Rhenish robber knights, named Sir Gilbert de Middleton. He was an old soldier of fortune, who had fought against Lewelin in the Welsh war and probably for that service was rewarded with the Castle and Manor of Mitford. But he was infuriated against King Edward, on account of the appointment to the See of Durham of Lewis de Beaumont, a cousin of the Queen's. It was said that Queen Isabella, "the French she-wolf," as she was called, had knelt upon her bare knees before the King, praying him to confer this fat Bishopric upon her kinsman. Sir Gilbert rebelled, proclaimed himself Duke of

Northumberland, and took the occasion of a mission which the King had sent to Scotland, headed by two Cardinals and the Bishop of Durham, to swoop down upon the Embassy and pillage it on its return South.

It was a mistake to attack the scarlet hat; the Church ever had a long arm. Sir Gilbert was taken prisoner by Ralph de Greystoke (or, according to Hollinshed, by Thomas Heton and William de Fulton), fettered in irons and carried to Newcastle, whence he was shipped to Grimsby. From Grimsby he rode to London with his feet tied under his horse's belly, was imprisoned in the Tower, and dragged by horses to the gallows on the 26th of June, 1318. His property and goods and those of his brother were confiscated. (See Hodgson's " Northumberland.")

In 1318 Mitford was the property of Adomar de Valence, Earl of Pembroke, and then it was that the last and fatal attack upon the Castle by the King of Scotland took place, and the grand old stronghold that had withstood the buffets of so many sieges was finally laid in ruins.

When one looks at the humble little village of Mitford to-day it is hard to realize that it was once a borough! I know not how it may be now, but when I was a boy the old folk held firmly to their traditions and to the legends of the ancient greatness of the place; there was an old rhyme which they loved to quote:

> " Mitford was Mitford ere Morpeth was ane
> And still shall be Mitford when Morpeth is gane."

The feeling of clanship was strongly rooted in the people. In the fifties of last century there was still living a delightful old woman, one Bella Harbottle, who with her brother inhabited two, or three rooms, which were all that remained of the seventeenth-century Manor House—just a tower in an old-fashioned garden, which the brother tended, in the beauty of which Bacon himself would have taken delight. The brother and sister were specimens of a grand old type of northern peasantry not yet passed away, thank Heaven! Their beautifully chiselled features, no less than their proud bearing and dignified manners, might have befitted the descendants of crusaders. She was always clad in an old-fashioned

lilac print gown, with a square of shepherd's plaid crossed over the bosom. Her delicate, high-bred face, with blue eyes, still bright and beautiful, was framed in the frills of an immaculate mutch covering her ears and almost hiding the snow-white hair; her small feet were always daintily cased in grey worsted stockings and scrupulously blacked shoes. She must have been nearly eighty years old when I used to sit with her in her kitchen—the aged dame on one side of the hearth, the little boy on the other, listening to her old-world tales of the past glories of Mitford. There were always a few old-fashioned flowers in the kitchen-parlour, and she herself sweetly reminded one of lavender. The good soul was always stout for the rights and honour of the family.

A gentleman who had bought a small adjoining estate built himself a house just on the boundary. Every day, almost, old Bella would walk out, leaning on her crutched stick, to see that there was no encroachment. The neighbour, aware of this, and greatly amused, said to her one day, "You see, Bella, it is all right. I am not removing my neighbour's landmark." "Ah!" grumbled she, with her sweet Northumbrian burr, "I'm thinking that you're building your house verra high." Even the air was sacred to the family of her worship.

To the east of the Manor House Tower is the old Norman church. When I first went to Mitford it was a mere wreck, just sufficiently weather-tight for service to be held; but it was beautifully restored some fifty years since by the piety of the last owner but one, Colonel John Philip Mitford.

And now it is time for us to leave the north and travel southward with those who are more immediately responsible for us.

Merchant John, then, came to London, where he seems to have prospered in his business, so much so as to make us wish that he had been furnished in his baptism with some other Christian name, for he became possessed of original shares in the Royal Exchange, the building of which King Charles the Second laid the foundation stone in 1667 to take the place of its predecessor of Queen Elizabeth's time, which had been destroyed in the great fire of 1666. Unfortunately there was no mention of these shares in his will. There is no doubt that they were the property of this par-

WILLIAM MITFORD (HISTORIAN OF GREECE)

From an oil painting by John Jackson, R.A.

ticular John, our immediate ancestor, and when my father and the late Lord Redesdale tried to prove their claim to them nobody doubted its justice, but they were defeated by the fact that they could not prove that there was no other John Mitford to whom they might have belonged; so there they lie in some mouldy old chest, more useless than dead leaves in autumn. Be this a lesson to those who call their sons John, or Thomas, or William, to give them some second and less usual name to make what, in armorial bearings, the heralds call a difference.

Of this John and his son William there is nothing to be said, but the son of the latter was another John, whose marriage on the 13th of September, 1740, with Elizabeth, the daughter and heiress of Willey Reveley, of Newton Underwood and Throphill in Northumberland and Newby-super-Wiske in Yorkshire, played an important part in the history of our family, for to them were born two remarkable sons, William, the historian of Greece, and John, the first Lord Redesdale. Indirectly, too, this marriage was the cause of a goodly inheritance coming to Lord Redesdale in 1808.

William Mitford,* who was born on the 10th of February, 1744, was my great-grandfather, and a man of many and various accomplishments, in his youth famous as one of the handsomest men of his day. Not only was he a profound scholar, but he had a great knowledge of art; he drew beautifully, and I have many of his water-colour paintings, which are of rare merit; his sketch-books recording his journeys in many parts of England are even now a joy to look through. The Royal Academy of his day recognized his worth by making him their historian, an office now filled by Lord Morley of Blackburn. In music, also, he was an expert, having a practical knowledge of several instruments, and so keen was he that when he was an old man, past seventy, he made a journey into Wales, a matter of several days in those posting times, in order to learn the principles of the triple Welsh harp.

He was Member of Parliament successively for Newport in Cornwall, Beeralston and Romney, and commanded the Hampshire Militia. It was as a Militia-man that he made friends with Gibbon, who was a brother officer in the same regiment, and who persuaded

* Painted by Jackson.

him to undertake the history of Greece, so that the Hampshire Militia had the honour of producing two classical historians—the one of the "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," the other of Greece.

Mitford's history naturally took the Tory side in Greek politics: Grote and Thirlwall followed on the Radical side. One day Thomas Carlyle began talking to me about my great-grandfather; Carlyle was certainly no Tory, but he praised the so-called Tory book far above the other two. He said "that Mitford had the talent of clothing the dry bones of history with living flesh and blood: he made the old Greeks speak and behave like human beings, breathing a living spirit into his work." The other two were so dreary and dull that they provoked no sympathy in him.

Beyond all this the old Colonel, as he was called, was a very skilful forester and gardener. I possess an old, much-worn pruning knife with a horn handle which he always carried about when he was engaged in his favourite pursuit of landscape gardening. When a boy, he and his brother had been at school at Mr. Gilpin's academy. Later in life he was able to present Gilpin to the living of Boldre in Hampshire. This led to the writing of the famous "Forest Scenery," which Gilpin dedicated to his former pupil and subsequent patron. Gilpin's brother was Sawrey Gilpin, R.A., the animal painter.

It happened that in the spring of 1862 my father, having some business to transact with his agent and being unable to attend to it himself, sent me down to Exbury to act on his behalf. Mr. Lewis Ricardo, who was the tenant at the time, hearing that I was going there, very kindly offered me bed and board, saying that, though he was detained in London, his housekeeper would look after me. She made me very comfortable, and after a light dinner and a pint of claret I went to bed. In the dead of the night I was awakened—as it seemed to me—by a most uncanny noise in the room over my head. Someone was dragging a very heavy weight up and down the floor; then I heard the door open, and the footsteps came down the stairs pulling the weight, bump, bump, bump, until whoever it was reached my door. Then there was silence for a minute or two, and presently the weight was

dragged up again, bumping as before, the door of the upstairs room was opened, the weight was dragged across it, and all was still.

I must have been dreaming all the time, for, though I was in deadly fear of I knew not what, it never occurred to me to get up and see what awful being it was that was standing so mysteriously outside my room. But the whole thing was so vivid that the next morning I asked the housekeeper who had occupied the room above me that night. Her answer was that the room had been empty and locked and the key in her possession.

When I got back to London I told my father what I had heard. He was a good deal startled, and replied that one of his grandfather's eccentricities had been, after a long day's literary work, to go up into an empty upstairs room and pull a heavy trunk about for exercise. I had never, so far as I knew, heard this before; but it is possible, if it be true that in our sleep we sometimes remember things long since forgotten, that I might in years gone by have been told of the old man's whim, and that the fact of sleeping in that house struck some chord of a vanished memory; as my father spoke, it almost seemed as if my presence had roused the spirit of the forefather to come and see what manner of creature his great-grandson might be. I insert the story for the benefit of the professors of oneiromancy. To me it seems a curious specimen of dream mystification.

The historian's eldest son, Henry, was a captain in the Royal Navy. He was twice married. By his first wife, the daughter of Anthony Wyke, Attorney-General of Montserrat, he had a son and two daughters, of whom only one, Frances, was alive in my time. She married her cousin, Bertram Mitford, the head of the family and Squire of Mitford, which she occupied after his death as a dower house; and so it happened that as a boy I passed many happy holidays in the old home. My grandfather's second wife was Mary Leslie-Anstruther, whom he married in 1803. In the same year he was appointed to the command of H.M.S. *York*, and before commissioning her he went down with his navigating officer —master was the title in those days—to survey her. They reported her unseaworthy. To that, the answer was, in effect, "Sail, or resign your commission."

Of course they sailed, and on Christmas Eve, 1803, in a fog in the North Sea, the *York* went down with all hands. Her guns of distress were heard, but no help was forthcoming. I have been told that one spar with "York" upon it was washed ashore on the coast of Yorkshire. There were not then the means that there are now, thanks to Lloyd's and modern inventions, of obtaining information as to wrecks, and that single spar was, I believe, the solitary evidence of the fate of the *York*. It was something very like an official murder.

My father was born on the following twenty-first of June, a posthumous child, and lived with his grandfather and his two sisters. His mother soon married again, her second husband being Mr. Farrer, of Brayfield in Buckinghamshire, who had been an officer in the Blues. I am afraid that my father had not a very happy childhood, for the historian seems to have been rather crabbed in his old age. Besides, he was fully taken up with his studies and his work, and cared not to busy himself with the yearnings of a child. However, his two half-sisters, Frances and Louisa, were devoted to their brother, and the little boy had a good friend in his grandfather's younger brother, John, who, in the meantime, had come to great distinction. Having been called to the Bar in 1777, he, three years later, published the famous book commonly called "Mitford on Pleadings," which speedily became a classic. Lord Eldon said that it was "a wonderful effort to collect what is to be deduced from authorities speaking so little what is clear"; while Sir Thomas Plumer declared that it "reduced the whole subject to a system with such universally acknowledged learning, accuracy and discrimination, as to have been ever since received by the whole profession as an authoritative standard and guide."

It was equally well accepted in America, and when I was in the United States in 1873 more than one well-known judge and lawyer came up to me wanting to know what relation I was to the "Pleadings." The success of the book brought prosperity and a seat in Parliament, by the favour of his cousin, the Duke of Northumberland. In 1793 he succeeded his lifelong friend Sir John Scott (Lord Eldon) as Solicitor-General; the Attorneyship fol-

lowed as a matter of course, and in 1801 he became Speaker of the House of Commons. This latter office he did not hold long, for in 1802 Lord Clare, who was Lord Chancellor of Ireland, died, and Sir John Mitford was appointed to succeed him, being raised to the peerage as Baron Redesdale of Redesdale in Northumberland, a title which he took from the beautiful moorland property on the southern slope of the Cheviots which he had purchased with the idea of linking himself as closely as might be with the border home of the ancient clan.

It was a great wrench to resign the Speakership of the House of Commons, a post of high honour for which he was admirably fitted. He left an assembly over which he presided with a dignity and impartial tact which confirmed the esteem and regard in which he was held by its members, and justified their choice. At the call of duty he parted from his friends and severed many ties of affection, to take up a task which, however congenial it might be professionally, carried him into a country where he was a stranger with a surrounding of men who were to him a new experience—men possessed of great talents and a charm peculiarly their own, but which did not appeal to his serious and rather matter-of-fact nature. On the bench his success was immediate and triumphant.

Sheil, who was called to the Bar in 1811, and must have known many of the counsel who practised before Lord Redesdale, said of him that he introduced a reformation in Irish practice "by substituting great learning, unwearied diligence, and a spirit of scientific discussion, for the flippant apophthegms and irritable self-sufficiency of Lord Clare," and Story pronounced him to be "one of the ablest judges that ever sat in equity."

The Irish Bar speedily recognized in him a scientific lawyer of the first quality, but the witty barristers, bubbling over with fun and rollicking spirits, were socially quite out of touch with him. He did not understand them, nor they him. O'Flanagan, in his "Lives of the Lords Chancellors of Ireland," tells several amusing stories of the way in which the lawyers—none too respectfully, considering the dignity of his office—cracked jokes in his solemn presence. "I never saw Lord Redesdale more puzzled,"

says Sir Jonah Barrington, "than at one of Plunket's *bons mots*. A cause was argued in Chancery, wherein the plaintiff prayed that the defendant should be restrained from suing him on certain bills of exchange, as they were nothing but kites. 'Kites!' exclaimed Lord Redesdale, 'Kites, Mr. Plunket? Kites could never amount to the value of these securities. I don't understand the statement at all, Mr. Plunket.' 'It is not to be expected that you should, my lord,' answered Plunket. 'In England and Ireland kites are quite different things. In England the wind raises the kite, but in Ireland the kite raises the wind.' 'I do not feel any better informed yet, Mr. Plunket,' said the matter-of-fact Chancellor. 'Well, my lord, I'll explain the thing without mentioning those birds of prey'—and thereon he explained that in Ireland bills and notes which are not what is termed good security are commonly called kites, because they are used to raise money, which is termed 'raising the wind.'"

Great as was Lord Redesdale as a judge, there were other duties of his office which militated against his being a success in Ireland. He was a devoted Church of England man and a bitter opponent of Catholic emancipation, and it was abhorrent to him that any office, even that of justice of the peace, should be held by a Roman Catholic. A letter addressed by him to the Earl of Fingal on appointing him to the Commission of the Peace provoked a correspondence which inflamed the Roman Catholics against him, and was fiercely blamed in the House of Commons by Fox and Canning.

The final crisis was brought about by his treatment of Lord Cloncurry, who had twice been arrested for high treason, imprisoned under the Habeas Corpus Suspension Act in 1799, and very harshly treated in the Tower of London. When the Habeas Corpus Act was restored, he regained his liberty after two years all but a few days, and went abroad for four years. On his return, a Mr. Burne, a King's Counsel, applied on Lord Cloncurry's behalf for his admission to the Commission of the Peace. Lord Redesdale resented this interference of a third person, and wrote Mr. Burne an angry and not very judicious answer, in which Lord Cloncurry's past history was raked up as a ground of refusal. This drew a furious letter from Lord Cloncurry himself, in which he recited the

illegality and cruelty under which he had suffered, and made a violent attack upon the bigotry and prejudice of the Chancellor. The Lord Lieutenant, the Earl of Hardwicke, at once ordered the Chancellor to insert Lord Cloncurry's name in the magistracy of the two Counties of Kildare and Dublin, and further offered to recommend that nobleman for promotion in the Peerage. The Viscount's coronet was refused, but the indignity placed upon the Chancellor was complete. Mr. Ponsonby was appointed to hold the Great Seal of Ireland, and pending his arrival, the Great Seal was put in Commission and Lord Redesdale was not even allowed to sit in the Court of Chancery—his own court. This, in his farewell speech to the Bar, he described as "a personal insult."

His final letter to Lord Cloncurry was characteristic. "My Lord, I have desired instructions with respect to the insertion of your lordship's name in the Commission of the Peace for the Counties of Dublin and Kildare, and I have to request that your lordship will be pleased to apply to Mr. Ponsonby, whom His Majesty has appointed Chancellor of Ireland, and to whom the Great Seal will be delivered as soon as he shall arrive in the country. I have, etc. (sgd.) Redesdale." So the stout old Lord stuck to his colours, and without bending left Ireland in 1806, having held his office for four years.

It is a singular instance of the fickleness of fate that he should have been hounded out of Ireland by the Roman Catholics of that country, when their co-religionists in England had a few years before got up a national subscription to present him with a magnificent piece of gold plate, in gratitude for the determined action in the House of Commons, by which they were relieved from those penal laws to which they had been subject for more than two hundred years. That golden vase is a treasured heirloom at Batsford.

There was nothing inconsistent in his conduct. His nature, essentially humane and merciful, recoiled from anything which savoured of persecution: at the same time, in the political government of his country, his Protestant principles and his attachment to the existing Constitution found no place for the professors of

a form of religion which, in his view, constituted a danger to the State.

Meanwhile, in 1803, Lord Redesdale had contracted a marriage with Lady Frances Perceval, daughter of Lord Egmont, and sister of the Prime Minister, Spencer Perceval, who was murdered by Bellingham in 1812. This happy union brought him three children, two of whom, his son who afterwards became first and only Earl of Redesdale, and Frances Elizabeth, survived him.

Lord Redesdale's father, John Mitford of Exbury, was married, as I have said above, to a Miss Reveley, whose sister* was the wife of Thomas Edwards Freeman,† a wealthy and highly respected squire in the County of Gloucester. This Mr. Freeman had only one son,‡ who predeceased him, as did also the son's wife, Mary Curtis§ that was, leaving a daughter‖¶ who married Mr. Heathcote of Dursley in Hampshire. But this daughter had apparently inherited the bad health of her parents; she had no child, and it became evident to Mr. Freeman that she was not likely to live: so in his will he made provision that failing her and any children that she might have, since he had apparently no relations of his own, his property should go to his wife's nephew, Lord Redesdale. Mrs. Heathcote did not survive her grandfather by many days, and almost immediately after his death in 1808, the property of Batsford passed to the ex-Chancellor of Ireland.

One fine day the old lord took his little son, aged three, to see Mr. Freeman, who went and fetched a crazy old barrel organ, which he proceeded wheezily to grind for the child's pleasure: when he had finished playing, the boy turned to his father and said with much dignity, "Give the old man a shilling!" to the

* Painted by Romney.

† Painted as a young man by a French artist in the manner of Nattier. Also as an old man by ——?

‡ Painted by Prince Hoare of Bath—foreign corresponding secretary of the Royal Academy

§ Painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds.

‖ Portraits of Mr. and Mrs. Heathcote by Owen.

¶ A pastel of her as a little girl with a pet goldfinch in a cage, by Russell—generally regarded as Russell's best work.

great amusement of the benefactor whose property the child was one day to inherit.

Lord Redesdale never again held any office, though Mr. Perceval wished him to return to the Chancellorship of Ireland. He knew how unpopular he was in that country, and wisely declined. He preferred his independence, and became a very useful and much consulted member of the House of Lords. Lady Redesdale died in 1817, and Lord Redesdale thirteen years later at the age of eighty-one.

The second Lord Redesdale, who was educated at Eton and at New College, Oxford, speedily made his mark in the House of Lords by his diligence and capacity for business. The Duke of Wellington appointed him to be his Whip, and encouraged him to master all the details of the procedure and private business of the House with a view to his becoming Chairman of Committees, an office for which on the death of Lord Shaftesbury in February, 1851, he was chosen unanimously and which he held until his death in 1886.

He was a keen sportsman, master and owner of the Heythrop hounds, which post he resigned when he found public business increasingly making inroads upon his time, but though he ceased to be master, the hounds remained his property until Mr. Albert Brassey, who had recently become master, made overtures to him to buy them. At first Lord Redesdale refused, but eventually yielded, and gave the purchase money, £2,000, to the hunt as an endowment. He was a good shot, though he very rarely went out with a gun; gave great attention to local affairs, never missing the sittings of the Board of Guardians. "Give old Pensioner (his hack) his head," said his studgroom, "and he'll go straight to Shipston.*" He continued to hunt so long as he was able and always hacked to covert, no matter what the distance might be.

No man was more looked up to, and I don't believe that he had an enemy in the world, unless it might be among certain Parliamentary agents and promoters over whose proceedings he kept so strict a watch that he earned the name of the Lord Dictator. It was mainly owing to his determined action that the

* Shipston on Stour, where the guardians meet.

attempt to abolish the appellate jurisdiction of the House of Lords fell through. His literary controversy with Cardinal Manning on the Infallible Church and the Holy Communion is still remembered by ecclesiastics. He wrote several pamphlets, chiefly on doctrinal or genealogical subjects, in which his arguments were always ingenious and well expressed. In 1877 he was created an Earl by Queen Victoria on the recommendation of Lord Beaconsfield.

Lord Redesdale never married. He and his sister kept house together at Batsford until her death in 1866. She was a woman of great ability, full of sympathy with all her brother's pursuits: her loss was a cruel blow to him, and during the twenty years which followed between her death and his, he never put off mourning. I was in the Far East when she died, and after all these years I could repeat by heart much of the touching letter which he wrote to me as being the one man to whom he could open out the grief that was in his soul.

Batsford stands on a lovely spur of the Cotswold Hills, crowned with a glory of oaks and elms, beeches, ashes and chestnuts, a most fascinating spot, and here it was that, under the genial influence of the kind old lord, whose portrait by Lawrence is the very embodiment of goodwill towards men, the happiest days of my father's childhood were spent.

The three little cousins were devoted to one another. It was a beautiful friendship which strengthened as they grew up, and only ended with their lives. No two men could have been greater contrasts than my father and the late Lord Redesdale: perhaps their affection was all the stronger for that; it had begun in childhood and lasted into extreme old age; they were always happy together, and when they were parted it was rarely that a day passed without their writing to one another. They went to the same schools, Iver first, then Eton, but not in the same house. At Oxford Lord Redesdale was at New College, my father at Magdalen.

My father did not stay long at college. He soon left the University to take up an attachéship at the Legation at Florence, where Lord Burghersh* was minister, in whom he had the luck

* Afterwards Earl of Westmorland, grandfather of the present earl.

to find a most sympathetic chief, devoted to art, and especially to music, which with my father was a passion. The musical society of Florence at that time was brilliant, and the young attaché was speedily welcomed into its intimacy. Of those days he had many stories, none, I think, more curious than this.

One evening after the opera there was a supper party at the house of the Grisis, the parents of the famous prima donna. Giudetta, the elder daughter, had been singing and the unhappy tenor had been hissed off the stage with all the viciousness of which an Italian audience has the secret. My father was sitting next to Giulia Grisi, then a little girl of twelve—it was in 1827—and he happened to say to her: "Ebben Giulia, I suppose some day you will be singing in grand opera?" "I sing in opera," answered the beautiful child, "and run the risk of being hissed like that wretched man to-night!" In two years' time, 1829, she made a precocious début at Bologna, and was not exactly hissed! Seldom can there have been a more triumphant career than hers from the day when, as a mere chit of fourteen, she dazzled the world with her beauty and that lovely velvety voice.

There was also at that time at Florence a very charming English coterie, which gathered round Lord and Lady Burghersh. Lord and Lady Dillon were there with their daughters, and I have often heard my wife's grandmother, old Lady Stanley of Alderley, who was one of them, say how agreeable the society of the Legation then was. Among others who occupied villas were my grandparents, Lord and Lady Ashburnham, and it was there that my father and mother made acquaintance. They were married in February, 1828.

There is much talk nowadays about links with the past. I take it that there are not many men who can say, as I can, that they had an uncle whose portrait was painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds who died in 1792. My grandfather's first wife was Lady Sophia Thynne, and there is a beautiful portrait of her at Ashburnham by Sir Joshua, playing with her baby boy who lies in her lap: that boy, my uncle, was born in 1785, just one hundred and thirty years ago. The picture was privately engraved, and I have one of the only twenty-five copies that were struck off.

His second wife, my grandmother, was Lady Charlotte Percy, sister of the Duke of Northumberland. She was a noted beauty, and there is a charming portrait of her by Hoppner, which has also been engraved.

Among the treasures which are at Ashburnham is one of the two shirts worn by King Charles the First at his execution. Everybody remembers how the King insisted on wearing two shirts lest on that cold January morning he should shiver, and men should think that it was from fear. The shirt was kept as a sacred relic by our ancestor, John Ashburnham, who attended His Majesty on the scaffold: it was deeply stained with the blood of the Martyr, and people used to beg to be allowed to touch it as a remedy for the King's Evil. When my grandmother came back from Florence, she asked the housekeeper where the shirt was. "Quite safe, Mylady," was the answer, "but it was so stained that I have had it washed." The pity of it! The second shirt is at Windsor.

My grandfather's Garter was a great honour, if something of a disappointment. He had been a great friend of George the Fourth when he was Prince of Wales, and the Prince had promised him that when he should come to the throne, he would show him some mark of his favour. Lord Ashburnham attended his first levée. In those days, and indeed down to the end of King William the Fourth's reign, a levée was not what it is now; it was a reception attended by very few people, and the King entered into conversation with everyone present in turn. The King greeted my grandfather most cordially, saying, "Ah! George, I see you have come to remind me of my promise. Well, there is a Garter vacant, and you shall have it." (The Garter, like all other honours, was then still in the gift of the sovereign without any reference to ministers). My grandfather was deeply grateful, but he had a large family, and he had hoped that he might have obtained for his second son some one of those snug offices to which the only duty attached was the reception of the salary—sinecures now all vanished!—and instead of that, at a moment when he was feeling rather poor, he had to find one thousand pounds for fees.

Of my mother's brothers and sisters, those that I knew best were

Ashburnham Family.
A. Van Dyck pinxt.
J. Ogborne sculp.
William, ob. 1655
John, ob. 1671.
William ob. 1679.
From a Picture, late in the Godolphin Collection.
Pub. by J. Thane, Spur Street, Leicester Square 1804.

THE ASHBURNHAM FAMILY.

my uncles Charles, who was in the Diplomatic Service, and Thomas, who was first in the Coldstream Guards and, after exchanging into the line, served in many Indian battles; his last post was that of Commander-in-Chief at Hong Kong; he was one of the wittiest of men, endowed with the power of giving a fantastic turn to the most commonplace topics, and his subtle humour was enhanced by being rendered in a musical speaking voice which was a special attraction in all his family. He was the darling of society, and might easily have been a spoilt darling, but that was impossible.

His last years—he died in 1872—were spent in the very able administration of various charities. The widow of my Uncle Charles, a brilliantly clever woman, married Sir Godfrey Webster, and became the châtelaine of Battle Abbey, which was afterwards bought by the Duchess of Cleveland, the authoress of the "Roll of Battle Abbey," and the mother of Lord Rosebery. My aunt, Lady Jane Swinburne, was the mother of the poet. She was a very cultivated woman, to whose bringing up he owed the finest side of his character.

I hardly knew my eldest uncle, Lord Ashburnham, the famous scholar and bibliophile, a man of recognized learning and taste. He was a great Pasha of whom men stood in terror. Old Mr. Quaritch, the bookseller, used to tell a good story of him.

Like the rest of mankind, he quailed before the great man. The running account between the two used to run into very high figures. One day Mr. Quaritch called at Ashburnham House, and the Earl, glaring at him through his awe-compelling spectacles, asked what he wanted. "Well, my lord, I have come to ask your lordship if you could let me have a little money on account." "Money, sir!" answered my uncle, "what on earth can you want with money?" "My lord, there is a great sale coming off at Paris next week, and as your lordship knows these Paris sales are a question of ready money." "Go away, sir! Go away! You want to go to Paris and speculate with *MY MONEY!*" A just indignation beamed through the awful spectacles. The argument was irresistible. Mr. Quaritch was glad to make his escape, crossed over to Paris the next day and did not "speculate with my uncle's money."

And now as a last word let me brag a little after the manner of

Ajax and Ulysses as recorded in the quotation from Ovid, with which I started this record. It is true that, unlike those heroes, I cannot claim a descent from Jupiter, who, after all, was rather a disreputable Père Prodigue; yet I am inclined, for my children's sake, and as an encouragement to them to incite their own children to prove themselves worthy "citizens of no mean city," to show them that they come of a goodly stock on both sides. I have in my possession a short family tree in the handwriting of the second Lord Redesdale, who, as I have said above, took great delight in genealogy. That tree shows that the Lords Ogle of Northumberland, who were our forbears, were descended both on the father's side and on the mother's from Charlemagne. My cousin traced it as follows:

Charlemagne, A.D. 800.
Pepin, King of Italy.
Bernard, 818.
Pepin, Lord of Peroune and St. Quentin.
Herbert I., 902.
Herbert II., Count de Vermandois, 943.
Robert, Count de Troyes.
Adelair = Geoffrey, Earl of Anjou, 957.
Fulco II., the Black Earl of Anjou.
Ermangarde = Geoffrey, Count de Gastinois.

Fulco IV., Earl of Anjou and King of Jerusalem
Geoffrey Plantagenet
Henry II., King of England
John
Henry III.
Edward I.
Edward II.
Edward III.
John of Gaunt.
Joan = Neville, Earl of Westmorland
Catherine = Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk
Catherine = Sir Robert Grey

Maud who married

Judith = Iro Tailbois, Baron of Kendal, 1114
niece of William the Conqueror and widow of Waltheof, Earl of Northumberland and Lord of Hepple Barony
William Tailbois de Hepple, 1150.
Richard.
Robert.
Robert
Robert, 1300
Joan heiress of Hepple Barony. = Sir Robert Ogle.
Annabella
Robert = Helen, daughter of Sir Robert Bertram.
Robert = Joan de Heton
Sir Robert Ogle.

Constance, the daughter of Sir Robert Ogle (the first Lord Ogle), married John de Mitford in 1437, and from them descended :

Bertram.
Gawen, 1550.
Cuthbert
Robert.
Cuthbert
Robert, b. 1612.
John.
William.
John.
William (the historian, my great-grandfather).
Captain Henry Mitford, R.N.
Henry Reveley Mitford.
Myself.

My wife's father, David, seventh Earl of Airlie, was the lineal descendant of the Mormaers, hereditary royal deputies of Angus. Scotland was in ancient days divided into seven parts, each ruled by a Mormaer or Maormor, a title which as long ago as the eleventh century was converted into that of Earl. The story of the Ogilvys in more modern days, how they fought for their King and were attainted as Jacobites, is too well known to need retelling, nor need I speak of the burning by the Campbells of the Bonnie House of Airlie. Historians have recorded it; poets and musicians have sung it.

Lord Airlie married Henrietta Blanche, the daughter of Lord Stanley of Alderley, a cadet branch of a family so proud that it used to be said of them " The Stanleys do not marry : they contract alliances." Here again are two pedigrees tracing back to the remotest times of which there is any record. There is no need to search out the family tree of the Stanleys to prove their descent from Charlemagne. It is a matter of common knowledge. It is only in the case of inconspicuous families like our own that it is well to set down for those who come after us that which is so easily lost sight of. When in this year, 1915, the shells are flying in the trenches, it should be a stimulant to a man to think that he has in his veins some of the blood of Charlemagne and of that glorious old Charles Martel, the hammer that at the battle of Poitiers saved Europe from being overrun by hordes of Saracens nearly twelve hundred years ago.

CHAPTER II

FRANKFORT—PARIS—TROUVILLE

I WAS born on the 24th of February, 1837, in South Audley Street, in a house long since pulled down, which stood at the southern corner of Hill Street. My father had left the Diplomatic Service on his marriage and for some years my parents lived at Exbury, the old family place overlooking the Solent through vistas in the trees, where, sitting in the drawing-room, you could see the great battleships with their bellying sails—men-of-war of the pattern of Nelson's days—the stately wooden walls of old England, the huge West Indiamen travelling to and from Southampton, "sailing between worlds and worlds with steady wing"—and the dainty little Cowes yachts pertly flitting among them like graceful white gulls.

Ships were indeed a thing of beauty in those days, and Exbury was an earthly paradise; but like diamond tiaras and ropes of pearls, it was a costly luxury, unremunerative. My people had to retrench, the lovely home was let, and they went abroad to economize. In this way it happened that I first awoke to life at Frankfort in 1840—that at any rate is my earliest dim recollection. Two years later my father left Germany and took us to live in France.

1842-1846.—I can hardly believe that it is only seventy-three years since we first went to live in France. When I think of the immense changes that have taken place in that beloved country since then, it seems more like seven hundred. The upheavals of wars and revolutions, two Dynasties gone, toppled over like houses of cards, sovereigns lauded up to the skies one year, hounded out

of existence the next, followed by the howls and execration of infuriated mobs; 1848 and the barricades—the *coup d'état* of 1851—the Second Empire—the Crimean War—Mexico and the murder of Maximilian—the war of 1870 followed by the Commune —France shorn of two great provinces—Paris improved out of all its picturesqueness by the commonplace uniformity of Haussmannism—only here a nook and there a corner left—all these seem to be transformation scenes which would need centuries to carry out, and yet they have all taken place in my lifetime. But not in France alone; in Europe, Asia, America, Africa and Australia, the seventy-eight years of my life have witnessed more changes than any similar period in the world's history.

For four years we passed the winter and spring—the season in those days—in Paris—never twice in the same apartments, though we always remained in the neighbourhood of the Madeleine—a convenient quarter for our elders and for ourselves, for it was no great distance from the gardens of the Tuileries, where we used to play with a number of little French friends—I have forgotten the names of all of them save only one called Jules—I suppose he had a surname, but if he did I never knew it—he was always "le petit Jules." He was of about my own age, very small, but of a quite demonic cleverness, and at marbles he was a hero. He broke us all, and many a time we went home with empty bags—not a bulge in ours—his bursting with wealth, and yet we loved him.

I remember one tragic episode of a beautiful white alley with rosy pink veins, the pride of my soul. The little villain challenged me to play him, offering to stake a superb agate against it. In less time than it takes to write the tale the alley was his. My beautiful white alley! I was but seven years old and I wept bitterly. I wonder whether "le petit Jules," if he is yet alive, remembers how he avenged Waterloo that day in his victory over the English boy. I don't suppose that he often plays marbles now, but if he is yet alive, I feel sure that his many talents have led him to great successes in all his endeavours, whatever they may have been.

Many merry days we spent among the trees and statues of those gardens, and often on a sunny morning we could see the old King, Louis Philippe, pacing the terrace fronting the river. He used

generally to wear a long grey great-coat with a huge steeple hat covering the famous *Poire**—an astute, none-too-reliable old man. He never had but one companion on his walks—probably General Baudrand, his most familiar friend—perhaps Guizot or some minister—talking earnestly, stopping every now and then to enforce a point with appropriate gesticulations. Hatching plots, Spanish marriage for Montpensier, or some other villainy? Probably. But that old grey coat covered a King, and we looked at it with awe.

As might be expected in the case of a King whose own people admitted that the one thing he lacked was dignity, his Court seems to have been the shoddiest affair that could be imagined; we used to hear many stories of its vulgarities. Old Lady Sandwich, grandmother of the present earl, spent much Irish wit upon it. Her descriptions of the bourgeois courtiers were inimitable. She happened to go to an audience just about the time that there was so much fuss about poor Queen Pomaré—the ex-Queen of Tahiti. The equerry who was to announce her asked the English lady's name.

"La Comtesse de Sandwich."

"Pardon, Madame, je n'ai pas bien compris."

"La Comtesse de Sandwich."

"Mille pardons, Madame—mais ces noms anglais sont si difficiles."

The man was evidently determined to be insolent, but Lady Sandwich turned the tables on him by saying with a laugh:

"Mon Dieu! Monsieur, dites donc la Reine Pomaré!"

That smothered him—everybody laughed, and she stalked into the presence majestic and triumphant.

Another time at a court ball, she had struggled through the shabby crowd to the buffet and got herself an ice, when a big hand snatched it from her and from the mouth that belonged to the hand there issued, "Enfoncée la petite mère!" She turned round, furious—it was her bootmaker in the garb of the Garde Nationale. He had only seen her back, so had not recognized her. When he did see——!

* The caricaturists used to make famous fun of Louis Philippe's head, with its hair brushed up in a sort of cone that made the stem of the pear.

Of the Royal Family in the Tuileries there were two members at whom nobody sneered, of whom nobody spoke an evil word—Queen Amélie and the Duc d'Aumale. Her goodness and dignity won universal respect and admiration. Of the Duc d'Aumale I shall have a word to say elsewhere. As for the rest, there was no great halo of majesty about them. The wily old fox himself was distrusted where he was not hated. The Legitimists spoke of him as the very incarnation of the Revolution, like his father Égalité, a traitor to his King and to his caste. How dared he call himself "King of the French" when his cousin was the lawful "King of France?" The sons, Nemours, Joinville, Montpensier, I used to hear spoken of with scant respect—no great harm about them; but poor creatures, commanding neither regard nor affection; nobody seemed to associate with them or to wish their friendship. When I came to know them later in life in this country I understood the talk to which I had listened as a child.

The death of the Duc d'Orléans excited sympathy from its tragic character, besides which he like the Duc d'Aumale, but in a lesser degree, had earned some credit in the Algerian campaign. I can just remember the horror with which the news of the fatal accident when he was thrown from his carriage, between Paris and Neuilly, was received. It was in 1842, just seventy-three years ago.

My father's many accomplishments—music, painting, languages—made him welcome beyond the usual run of foreigners in French society. He was, moreover, wonderfully well-read in the old memoirs of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and quite an authority on historic French portraits. So much so that when I once said to him that I felt sure that if he were to find himself transported back to one of the famous salons of those times he would know almost all the people by sight, his answer was, "Upon my word, I believe I should."

The society of the Faubourg n the early forties must have been very interesting; there were so many people still living who could talk as eye-witnesses of the horrors of the great Revolution: at the time of our sojourning in France there was less interval separating us from the Terreur than there is between to-day and the Crimean War.

A man of seventy years in 1842 was twenty years of age when the King was murdered; yet it seems difficult to believe now that, as a child, I often listened, my hair almost on end, to men and women telling how they had seen their nearest and dearest led off in the tumbrils to the shambles of Monsieur de Paris, and recounting the miracles by which they themselves had escaped. There were many such. Indeed, the Duchesse d'Angoulème herself—the woman of so many tears that to her dying day in 1851 her poor eyes suffered from the chronic weeping known as *gutta lachrymans*—who as a child had, with her unhappy mother, gone through the miseries of the Conciergerie, and seen the King and Queen, both her parents led away to the scaffold, was living, though not in France, and my father knew her well—in all respects a wonderful woman, of whom Napoleon said that she was "the only man in the family."

It is now the fashion to laugh at the story that Robespierre, minded to marry her, sought an interview with her in prison. She, warned beforehand, maintained a dead silence, refusing to utter a word, and he left the room, banging the door and exclaiming, "Bégueule comme toute sa famille." My father, who had exceptional relations with the old French Legitimists, firmly believed that this really happened, and he had good reason for his faith. Of people whom I actually knew and who had survived the Revolution, several were in various ways notable.

At Trouville we became very intimate with the family of the Marquis de Chaumont Quitry. The two sons, Félix and Odon, were splendid young men who, among others, made the place gay, and on a fine evening they would carry out their *trompes de chasse* and make the rocks ring with the "Hallali," the "Rendez-vous des Chasseurs," and other fanfares, to the great joy of us children.

The old Marquis had been a great figure among the *émigrés*. When still little more than a boy he had contrived to make his escape from the Terreur with his young wife, and landed in England with a few pounds in his pocket. Many friends were eager to help him, but he was as proud as his ancestor, Robert de Chaumont, the knight of the First Crusade, and he would accept nothing.

With the little money that he had he bought cloth, thread, scissors, needles, and whalebone, and set up with the Marquise as a stay-maker somewhere in Soho—a hero, if ever there was one—and it became the fashion for fine ladies to have their stays made by the noble descendant of Crusaders whose pedigree could be traced back to Charlemagne.

There was another wizened little old gentleman, whose name I have forgotten, who used to tell us anecdotes of the straits to which he was put during his life in London; but after all, it might have been worse, and he was able to feed himself for very little money. In the cheap slum in which he lived there used to appear every morning a man with little pieces of meat on skewers; for two or three pence you could obtain " des petites portions," quite enough for a meal, " et ma foi ! ça n'était pas trop mauvais; ça s'appelle Kami." He was dealing with the cat's-meat man!

I used often to be taken to see the venerable Marquise du Mesnil, who had been lady-in-waiting to Marie Antoinette. The old lady lived in a wonderful apartment full of glorious old furniture, Gobelins tapestry, Sèvres china, vernis Martin, fans and pictures, memorials of the old Court which would fetch a king's ransom to-day. I sometimes wondered whether the windows of those rooms had ever been opened since the house was built, for the air was thick with a peculiar musty, stuffy, mousey smell, over which neither musk nor verveine could prevail. Here she sat bolt upright with a priceless snuffbox in her wizened hand, telling tales which made me gasp with terror, until I could almost see Judith carrying the bleeding head out of the tapestry in the boudoir to the music of the *carmagnole* in the street below.

At the Musée Carnavalet, or looking at the Princess de Lamballe's little pink slipper at the Cluny, I am reminded of that house of fear from which I used to escape trembling, but to which, such was its weird fascination, I always used to beg to be taken every time my people went to visit there. The old lady was always very kind to the little boy who never quite knew whether he feared or loved her, but who had a lurking suspicion that she must be some relation of that fairy who was not asked to the christening.

A great pleasure on our homeward walk from the Rive Gauche

was to be allowed, after recrossing the river, to go through the Place du Carrousel, between the Louvre and the Tuileries, not then the magnificent, dull and highly respectable space that it now is, but a regular fair, with all sorts of cheap booths, where dogs and cats and monkeys, many strange beasts, birds from over-sea islands, parrots and fowls with gaudy plumage, snakes, tortoises, cheap and entrancing sham jewellery and rubbish were for sale. It was very picturesque, very smelly and very dirty, the screams of the macaws, the barking of the dogs, and the cries of the vendors made the day noisome and hideous, but we youngsters loved it with all its filth, and the present spick-and-spanness is no compensation for the magnets of attraction that have been swept away.

I wonder where these sweepings agglomerate into life again There must be some place where the humble *piou-piou* buys a cheap ring for his lady-love, some place where the *marchand de coco* tinkles his bell among the crowd, where the distressful person who earns his living by picking up cigar-ends, now partially ruined by the cigarette craze and the end of snuff-taking, can ply his trade, and the cries of the old-clothes man and the dealer in stale fruit may be heard, some place from which modern ideas will drive them once more into the wilderness; for after all, it must be admitted that the picturesque charms of Petticoat Lane are hardly in harmony with the sedateness of an improving neighbourhood, let alone a great architectural quadrangle separating two palaces, one, alas! now gone for ever.

There were other walks—the Jardins des Plantes, the Bois de Boulogne, and so many pleasant expeditions. But what I grew to love most, as the years rolled on, were the quaint old nooks and corners that we used to come upon in remote and unexpected places, remnants of the old Paris of the Trois Mousquetaires—delightful people!—curiously gabled streets where the oil lanterns still swung from wires fastened to the houses on either side, places just fit for ruffiers like d'Artagnan, Athos, Porthos, Aramis, swaggering hand on hilt; dark, mysterious, labyrinthine quarters, very primitive and no doubt very unhygienic; but then you cannot have everything.

One not very judicious outing I remember when I was seven years old, and a sentimental tutor from Demler's school, to which we were sent, took several of his pupils, myself among them, to the Morgue to see the corpse of a girl who had been murdered—stabbed to death—by her sweetheart. It was a horrid place, that old Morgue, where the dead bodies were laid out naked on marble slabs with a tiny trickle of water playing upon them, like salmon in a fishmonger's shop, and their poor rags of clothing hung damp, empty and melancholy from the ceiling. The sight almost made me sick and fed me with nightmares for weeks.

One of my father's best friends in Paris was the old Duchesse de Rauzan. She had recently built herself a house at Trouville, on the sands near the mouth of the river. Trouville was then a tiny fishing village. The only other house besides that of the Duchesse was one built close to hers by Doctor, afterwards Sir Joseph, Olliffe, the physician to the English Embassy. The Duchesse was anxious to get a few of her friends to camp for the summer in the fishermen's cottages and make up a pleasant *coterie.* Amongst others, she persuaded my father to join the party. One day my father had taken me with him to call on the Duchesse, to inquire further before deciding, and as we were sitting there, a footman announced " Monsieur le Docteur Billard."

" What a piece of luck ! " said the Duchesse. " Monsieur Billard is the Trouville doctor, so you will be able to ask him all about it."

Questioned, Billard answered, " Monsieur, Trouville est un trou ! " and went into fits of laughter at the fullness of his own wit.

The answer, however, did not suit the Duchesse's book, so the poor doctor was promptly snubbed and told not to talk nonsense. I was destined to see a good deal of that learned man of pills and noxious draughts in the next four years, and he became one of my most intimate enemies. He was a primitive, and so far as I was concerned he had but one remedy, a horrible decoction of gum arabic and sugar, called *sirop de gomme,* which presumably was intended to glue together any little portions of the human organization which might have got out of joint, and was his panacea for all ailments except the toothache ; for that he had a dreadful

instrument of torture called a German key—upon me he experimented with both.

He was a humorist: "N'ayez pas peur, mon petit ami; nous allons guérir ça avec un peu de baume d'acier." In went the "baume d'acier" into my mouth, and with a great wrench out came the tooth. Howling with pain, rage and indignation at having been tricked, I wreaked an inadequate revenge upon M. Billard's shins. But this is forestalling events. In spite of the doctor's wit, the Duchesse easily talked over my father, and the result was five most happy summers in the brightest of surroundings.

And so it came to pass that one fine day in 1842 we all embarked on the railway, then a very new institution, which went no further than Rouen, where we slept, and on the following morning two huge yellow diligences, which my father had chartered to carry us and our fortunes to the Norman coast, were standing outside the old-fashioned inn. My father, my grandmother, two aunts, my two brothers and myself, besides a German tutor and a white poodle, made up the crew.

Greatly hindered was the packing of the crazy old coaches by that nondescript, motley crowd that used to fill an inn-yard on those occasions, a crowd quite unknown to the traveller of to-day, long since as extinct as the great auk, all shouting, swearing and spitting, all giving different opinions, with much gesticulation, as to what trunk should be placed where, in unison only when the question of *pourboires* turned up, in unison then—not in harmony.

Off at last! The great lumbering diligences rattling over the cobble stones of the glorious old cathedral city, stopping now and then for pack-thread repairs to the harness, the coachman cracking a long whip, the stick made of twisted willow and garnished with red cotton tassels to match those on his horn, which he from time to time tootled distractingly, shouting at his horses, the near leader, a favourite, being addressed lovingly as "Coco," the off leader held up to contempt as a "sacred canary-bird," and the wheelers being left to jog on in peace as the spirit moved them, nibbling with fond kisses at one another's ears, and all four merrily jingling their bells.

It was a weary journey, and we were all very tired, hungry,

cross and scratchy (for the straw in the bottom of the diligence harboured a colony of greedy fleas), when we rolled along the quay in state and finally drew up at the chemist's shop, kept by one Madame Gamard, the upper floors of which we were to occupy.

It was a mean old house, at the entrance to a curly street, the back windows of which overlooked a butcher's shambles, where every morning at daybreak bovine sacrifices took place, a gruesome sight, which the German tutor used to wake us up to witness. He would not have missed a death-blow or a groan for anything. He revelled in blood like Ivan the Terrible. If only, as in the case of the cruel Tsar, it had been human blood, one felt that his treat would have been complete. At the back of the house slaughter; in the front drugs and potions in wonderfully inscribed gallipots, interspersed with fly-blown caramels and sugared almonds almost as nauseous as the salts and senna.

Only a maid and a cook, with my nurse and my father's manservant, came with us from Paris, so as we were a largish party, my grandmother had to engage two additional women selected from the local talent. Her star was in the ascendant when for one of them her choice fell upon Marie Letac—and here I am at once met by a difficulty. How to spell the name? As no member of the Letac family had ever been taught to read or write, such superfluous accomplishments not being the fashion at Trouville, the spelling was a matter of debate. Should the name end with a *c*, or *que*, or *cque*, or *ques*, or *cques*? I take the line of least resistance and adopt the final *c*.

Marie was a dear, rosy-faced, good-humoured, very plump person of some forty years—snuff her one dissipation, her one extravagance. How she managed to stow away so much was a mystery; a large, flat nose and the stains on her apron would account for some of it, but surely not for all. Her union with a thin, red-haired, weasel-faced carpenter had been blessed by a numerous family, obviously hardy annuals. She was a great character, but when she came back the following year from Paris, whither she had insisted on accompanying us, she became a notable authority touching the glories of the capital, upon which she would descant to Weasel-face and a select circle of *commères*, listening open-

mouthed, with their hands folded under their aprons upon their ample stomachs. What struck her most in Paris was the beauty of the potatoes. "Parlez-moi des pommes de terre de Paris! C'est si-z-aimable à cuir." Of the servants' quarters in a Paris house she did not approve so highly, and no wonder, for they were wretched dens under the roof, often not weathertight. She sometimes acted as my nurse, and I can hear her now, after bidding me good night, saying, "Où's'qu'il est le parapluie?—allons nous coucher!"

One fine day there came to Trouville a travelling dentist and quack, a sort of Dr. Dulcamara, who established his cart on the quai near the fish market. He announced himself as "La Gloire de la Science," the favourite medicine-man and confidant of the Emperor of Russia and the other Crowned Heads of Europe. He was dressed in an old ragged blue military coatee with scarlet worsted epaulettes, dirty white breeches and top-boots. On his head rested the dignity of a huge cocked hat with a tall tricolor plume. He carried a gigantic sword, and his warlike appearance was enhanced by a pair of phenomenal black moustachios. In attendance upon him were a performer on the key-bugle and a *pitre*, or jack-pudding, whose business it was at the psychological moment to bang a big drum and crash a pair of cymbals in order to drown the howls of the victims of dentistry.

Marie Letac, who had been suffering from toothache, was wild to go and consult the "Glory of Science." My aunt promised to pay the fee, so off she went and mounted the learned doctor's cart. A little while later we went out and met Marie Letac with a duster before her mouth, bleeding profusely, crying with pain, yet half laughing at her own plight—one might almost say weeping merrily.

"Well," said my aunt, "so you have had it out?"

"Seven of them," blurted out Marie.

"Seven! Impossible!"

"Oh! du moment que c'est mademoiselle qui régale!" and with that she went off bleeding but content.

The man of pills, potions, and forceps did a roaring trade that day; the drum and cymbals were never idle, and there was a great

crowd of sailors and fishwives, standing unwearied for many hours, happy in the enjoyment of an exhibition which was free, and in the contemplation of the pain of their friends and neighbours.

I think, though it is anticipating by a good many years, that I must finish the story of our relations with Marie Letac. She remained with us all the time we were in France, and was heart-broken when we left—that was in 1846. We spent the summer holidays of that year at Tunbridge Wells, and one day, as we were all sitting at luncheon, there came a ring at the bell, and we were told that there was a French beggar-woman who wanted to see my aunt. She ran out of the room and presently came back with Marie, travel-stained, tired, footsore, and almost worn out, but crying for very happiness. She said that she could bear the separation no longer, so she had gone to Havre, taken boat for Southampton, and walked all the way to Tunbridge Wells. How she managed to find the road, not knowing a word of English and almost penniless, was a puzzle. She had an addressed envelope and that was all, but here and there she met with a kind person who knew a little French and helped her, and so at last the faithful creature reached us. She did not stay very long, for she had her husband and the hardy annuals to look after, and she was sent back to Normandy, this time travelling decently and in comfort.

The following summer we went back to Trouville, and of course she came to be with us. After that we never saw her again. But every Yuletide there came a letter to my aunt, written by the village scribe in pompous language, beginning, " Je croirais manquer à mon devoir si je ne m'empressais pas," etc., etc., with many good wishes and felicitations. At last, after many years, there was a sad Christmas which brought no letter. Poor Marie " avait manqué à son devoir." She was dead.

Of Trouville Alexandre Dumas père was the Columbus, la Mère Oseraie the George Washington. What the one discovered, the other made. The " Bras d'Or," the solitary little inn over which Madame Oseraie shed the very sunshine of kindness, became famous as a summer resort for the long-haired denizens of the Quartier Latin of Paris. It was quite humble and very cheap, but it was

specklessly clean, and the cooking was undeniable, for the hostess was a born *cordon bleu*. The elder Dumas was no mean judge, and when he gave her his blessing, her omelettes were said to be a dream, her *soupe aux choux* a revelation. The great man had spoken, and the " Bras d'Or " became a sort of suffragan headquarters for some of the painters of the Barbizon school, and a small gang of imitative *rapins* who followed in their wake. It suited their meagre purses; for three or four francs a day they were lodged and fed upon the fat of the land, with bread and cider *à discrétion*.

As for Madame Oseraie herself, round, fat, and fubsy, with a most genial smile and welcome, she looked as if she had been made to suckle the world on the milk of human kindness. The good inn was never empty, and the guests went back to Paris all the better for the rest, with a dip in the sea, fresh, strong air and good food, carrying a satchel full of sketches to work upon in their cock-loft *ateliers* till the time should come round for another happy summer holiday. But after 1842 no more " Bras d'Or " for the poor *rapins!* The grandees from Paris had taken possession of Trouville; Madame Oseraie not unreasonably raised her prices, and the poor, long-haired, imperfectly-washed, but very merry ne'er-do-weels must move on to some other and, let us hope, equally happy hunting ground.

When the great people came they had perforce to accept the simple life. The fisher folk furbished up their cottages according to their humble ideas of æsthetic extravagance, and their lodgers, who had left behind them rooms rich with Gobelins and Beauvais tapestry, furnished with masterpieces by Riesener, Caffieri and Gouthières, had to content themselves with hideous cheap wall-papers the colour of which came off in dust upon their coats and gowns, and with such poor sticks and stocks as the modest homes could afford. What became of the owners, in what troglodytes' dwellings they lay hidden, counting over their little harvest, is more than any man can say.

One or two artists, a little less hairy and a little better off than the old patrons of the inn, came with the mighty. There were the two brothers Mozin, Charles and Théodore, the one a clever painter, the other a musician, and Vogel, beloved of the none-too-critical

Paris ladies for his sugary ballads all about love and cottages and despair—songs as sweet and smooth as the almond-paste in a wedding-cake. They brought a sort of mild æsthetic leaven into the general hotch-potch; the dandies copied their scarlet flannel blouses and their *bérets;* the smart ladies accepted their sketches and the dedications of their songs, feeling that in so doing they were laying a claim to a reputation for culture.

A vision of the *plage* at Trouville was Madame de Contades, who came down from Paris one year to breathe a little health after some serious illness. She used to be carried on to the sands on a canvas litter by two sturdy fishermen in their blue jerseys and knitted caps, and when she was comfortably established with her book, her fan, her parasol, and her bottle of smelling-salts or some cunning essence, she would be surrounded by a bevy of children, pages and tiny maids of honour, all eager to render her homage and do her some small service—a lilliputian court quite as much in love with her as the dandy moths that singed their wings in her flame.

How beauty appeals to children! That sweet, pale face, framed in soft brown curls like the Cenci of Guido Reni, is a fascination to me to-day as it was seventy years ago and more. She should have remained a tender invalid; but the rough Norman breezes brought back the roses to her cheeks and strength to her shapely limbs, and the next I heard of our beautiful queen was swimming a race against another lady in the Seine at Paris. To her lilliputian court this seemed an outrage of *lèse-poésie*. Indeed, it was deemed a little unusual at that rather stiff period.

The Lubersacs, Barbantanes, Blacas, followed the lead of the Duchesse de Rauzan, as should beseem daughters and sons-in-law. Notable also was the Duchesse de Gramont Caderousse, with her two boys, daily playfellows of ours, the second of whom became the famous *viveur*, dandy, duellist, and eccentric of the Second Empire—I shall, perhaps, speak of him later. The elder brother died as a boy.

Sunday was a great day, when the little street and the *plage* were quite alive with holiday folk who flocked in from the neighbouring farms and villages to see the fine people from Paris. It was a very picturesque crowd. Of course the sailor-men were all

dressed in their best blue cloth, with their red knitted woollen caps throwing a tassel jauntily on one side. The well-to-do farmers' wives and daughters were very smart. Striped petticoats coming down a little above the ankle, showing a neat little pair of wooden sabots, or even leather shoes; black-silk aprons; white fichus folded over their breasts; upon their heads the old, high twelfth-century caps, trimmed with lace, which our ladies said was beautiful, handed down from mother to daughter for generations.

A few years ago I was at Trouville once more upon a Sunday. Alas! the old costumes were no longer there. The present generation of farmers' wives were all garbed and hatted in imitation of Paris fashions. It was too sad! They were a fine, strapping, healthy race of women, with beautiful skins and cheeks as rosy as the apples of their own orchards. Some of the girls were very handsome, sweet and modest-looking; rather shy of the foreigners. It may be said that I was not of an age to judge, but I was a long-eared little pitcher, and I heard what my elders said. The men were not so picturesquely attired, but there was a touch of local character about their get-up also.

A great ally of ours was a certain old Monsieur Pommier (I don't suppose he was more than forty, but to us he seemed a Methuselah), who always came to see us dressed in his Sunday best. A brown coat as stiff as iron, and as uncomfortable as a strait waistcoat, with a ridiculous little pair of tails about six inches long sticking out behind almost at right angles to his waist; a phenomenally high collar reaching to his ears, a tall stock above a flowered white waistcoat; on his reddish, close-cropped head a black beaver hat, brushed the wrong way; in his hand a stick with the thick end downwards, held by a leathern thong at the small end; tiny side-whiskers, and a face and nose shining from recent soapsuds. He was the type of the prosperous Normandy farmers and cider-makers of his day. If they were proverbially a close-fisted race, they knew how to be hospitable, and there was an old-world courtesy which pierced through their roughness and was most attractive. To us they were very kindly, and the memory of them is still pleasant.

It was a motley crowd that came to mix with the grand ladies, the dandies, the *nounous*, the little bare-legged children making

sand-castles, watching an itinerant Polichinelle or scrambling about the mussel-clad Roches Noires under the careful eyes of governesses and tutors.

But gay and bright and happy as the Sunday was out of doors, inside our house it was dreary and penitential. My grandmother, a Leslie-Anstruther by birth, had inherited all the bigotry of the old Covenanters, and under her rule, kind and loving as it was on week-days, the Sabbath was day on which no expression of joy was permitted. Many hour were consumed by her in various forms of deadly dull worship. Even we, mere children, had to sit through a service which was made as forbidding as it could be. She began with the morning service read from beginning to end, including the priestly absolution, which she delivered with peculiar unction; then came the Litany, which the professional cleric omits when the morning prayer has been given in its entirety; then the Communion service. By that time most performers would have been exhausted—not so my grandmother; she proceeded to deliver one of Blair's sermons, and woe be to us if we yawned, or fidgeted, or were guilty of inattention!

I remember one special Sunday. I must have been about six years old when I was promoted to a pair of trousers; they were made by the village tailor out of a hideous black-and-white check horse-cloth, very coarse and prickly, like the hair-shirt of a medieval saint. Every time I moved the sharp points entered into my tender flesh; to kneel was a penance, to get up again and sit down a torture. My fidgets and groans could not be restrained; they were a criminal interruption, and I was punished accordingly, but at any rate, in order that the punishment should be effective, the cruel trousers had to be taken down, and that was a consolation, though only temporary, and not unmixed with a counter-irritation of pain. In these circumstances religion was what the great Lord Halifax called "a *vertu* stuck with bristles, too rough for this Age."

In 1845 we stayed on at Trouville long after all the other summer visitors had fled, like the swallows. No one left but the fisherfolk and ourselves.

In the late autumn the sea became leaden, ugly, cruel-looking.

One stormy day when I fought my way as usual against the wind down to the deserted sands, close to where the bathing-machines were drawn up in idleness, I came upon a group of fishermen carrying something blue and limp, a belated bather whom they had risked their own lives to rescue from the waves growling savagely upon the beach, lashing themselves, as it seemed to me, into a fury at being robbed of their prey. It was difficult to believe that it was the same sea that a few short weeks before had rippled so gently, kissing the pretty feet of the paddling children! On such days as those I felt very much alone and longed to get back to the Gardens of the Tuileries and the merry games with our little *camarades*.

But there were bright days in the waning year, when we made expeditions to neighbouring farm-houses, or tramped along the frosty riverside road to the little town of Touques, with its black-and-white timbered houses and the picturesque ruins of the old Norman castle.

What a joy it was when I was about eight years old to let my imagination run riot, peopling the old keep with visions of knights and dames and beautiful Jewesses! I was in the middle of reading "Ivanhoe" and here was indeed a setting for the book. I could fancy myself at Torquilstone and conjure up living pictures of the Black Knight, Front de Bœuf, the Templar, Athelstane, and Cedric the Saxon. There was a beautiful peasant girl in her high Norman cap, wandering down below among the now leafless apple orchards; could she be the Lady Rowena? And that sturdy, rather ruffianly vagabond standing in the ancient archway. Surely no other than Gurth the swineherd! Phantoms conjured up by the Wizard of the North.

In August, 1847, we were once more at Trouville, and it was for the last time. In former years we had been wont to see more of that romantic Norman coast than most people did; for we were not fashionable: we used to arrive in early spring, long before the orchards were brilliant with the bravery of the apple blossoms, and more than once we stayed on long after the last glorious red fruits had been gathered for the cider-vats, when the first frosts had coloured the falling leaves, and the hedges

yielded no more blackberries with which to smear our small faces. This year our stay was bounded by the Eton holidays.

It was a fateful month—fateful for France—for it was the month in which the Praslin tragedy took place, a tragedy which might perhaps by now have been mercifully forgotten had it not played so important a part in the political history of that time.

One beautiful summer day, when all the little world of Trouville was gathered together upon the velvety sands, the terrible news arrived. Two young Irish ladies came running up to my aunts weeping bitterly—almost in hysterics. They were great friends of the Praslin family and had just heard that the poor Duchess had been murdered and the Duke arrested. I remember the thrill of horror with which the news was received on the *plage*, and that thrill throbbed through all France. The Duc de Praslin had driven the first nail in the coffin of the Orleans monarchy.

For some five or six years the Duke and Duchess, who had a large family, had had in their service as governess a certain Mademoiselle de Luzy. Of this lady the Duchess, with or without reason, but most probably with very good reason, at any rate so far as the transfer of her husband's affections was concerned, had become furiously jealous: so much so that her father, Marshal Sebastiani, insisted upon Mademoiselle de Luzy's dismissal. This, however, did not put an end to the intimacy, of whatever nature it may have been, between her and the Duke, for it was shown that on the arrival of the family in Paris from the country, he drove at once to her house. That night the murder was committed. When the servants entered the bedroom, they had to face a sight so appalling that M. Delessert, the Prefect of Police, whose business made him familiar with the horrors of crime, told Mr. Henry Greville that in all his experience he had not come across so ghastly a spectacle. There were signs of a desperate struggle, for the unhappy Duchess, a short but stout woman, had evidently fought fiercely for her life.

Suffice it to say here that the evidence against the Duke was damning. A pistol known to belong to him had been used as a bludgeon, and was clotted with blood and hair—some of the hair was his own, pulled out in the cruel fight! He had opened

the window in order to excite the belief that the crime was the work of burglars; but it was pointed out to him that nothing had been stolen, and that a figure resembling his had been seen from the outside opening the casement—upon which he observed that the matter assumed a grave aspect. He was arrested and carried to prison, but managed to take a dose of poison which proved insufficient; a second dose was smuggled, as it was averred, into his cell, and of this he died; but there were many people who believed that the poison was a farce, and that he was spirited away to England, where he is supposed to have lived for many years in hiding somewhere in the Lake district. The possibility of this escape was strenuously denied both by M. Delessert and the Procureur-Général; but it is significant that the former did not himself see the Duke's body, although it was his duty to do so. He was prevented by other business.

Mademoiselle de Luzy was arrested and kept in solitary confinement. But when she was examined she gave her evidence clearly and simply. Nothing was elicited to show that she was *particeps criminis*, or even that her relations with the Duke had gone beyond the bounds of propriety. She was of course released, and afterwards married very respectably.

All France was moved to the core by the horror of the crime; but what aroused even more indignation than the murder itself was, as I well recollect, the widespread idea that for political reasons there had been a miscarriage of justice and that the murderer, owing to his exalted position, had been allowed to disappear scot-free.

There were whisperings and mutterings, and grave doubts expressed even in high places; but in the lower strata of society, among the *bourgeoisie* and the proletariat, there were sullen, ominous thunder-growls boding ill for a government which had long since forfeited all claim to popularity; the whole affair was shrouded in a mystery which was more than enough to excite the minds of a highly inflammable people. Republicans and Socialists had for some years been on the war-path: now they were goaded by laws gagging the press and proscribing public meetings. These laws, initiated by Guizot and furiously opposed

by Thiers, brought about the final crash; the revolution broke out, and on the 22nd of February, 1848, the King and his Queen were hounded out by the mob of Paris. A few days later a slippery old gentleman with a curious pear-shaped head and profuse expressions of geniality—a commodity which he always kept in stock—landed at Newhaven. He said he was Mr. Smith.

Whether the Duc de Praslin died in prison, a suicide as well as a murderer, or whether his flight was connived at by the mighty, is one of those secrets which will remain hidden till the Day of Judgment. It used to be said that members of his family were in the habit of paying annual visits to him in England. The French authorities always scouted this idea; but many years later facts came to my knowledge which proved that one of his very near relations did make a practice of coming to England periodically, and that during those expeditions he was for the most part lost to the sight of his friends. Whither he went no one knew.

It is a strange coincidence that the fall of the last two monarchies in France—that of Louis Philippe and that of Louis Napoléon—should in each case have been heralded by a single murder. These were crimes which stirred the wildest passions, the fiercest and most unthinking resentments of the mob, and however unjustly, the penalty for them was paid by those who had no hand in them.

CHAPTER III

ETON

THERE are days in a man's life which he never forgets; his first day at school is one of them. My maiden appearance at Eton was in 1846, sixty-nine years ago at this time of writing, but that lovely day in May is as fresh in my memory as if it had been last week. I was only nine years old, but I suppose that I was rather impressionable for my time of life, and my young imagination had been fired by the enthusiasm of my father and many of his friends, whose chief pride always had seemed to lie in the fact that they were old "Eton fellows."

Their stories of school days—chiefly blood-curdling tales of scrapes and punishments borne with Spartan fortitude or avoided by hair's-breadth escapes, the chief joys of scholastic memory—had sunk deeply into my mind, so that Eton seemed very familiar; and yet when I faced its reality, the *religio loci* was a revelation. I remember the mixed feeling—a great joy, a shrinking fear—before the plunge into the great unknown; the sorrow of leaving home, the freedom of new wings, the exultation of life. I remember the terror lest I should be guilty of some solecism upon which the wrath of the gods of the sixth form should fall; I remember a heart throbbing as men's hearts might throb before a battle, when my father rang at Mr. John Hawtrey's* door (for I was to start in lower school) and my relief at the sight of his and Mrs.

* Mr. John Hawtrey (cousin of the Head Master) kept a house at the corner of Keate's Lane reserved for boys of the lower school. There was no fagging in his house—but his boys were liable to outside fagging. He afterwards kept preparatory schools at Slough and later at Westgate-on-Sea. He was the father of Mr. Charles Hawtrey, the famous actor.

Hawtrey's kind faces, and of the comfortable matron, Mrs. Paramour, ample of bosom and sympathy, to whose care I was commended!

Then the awe of being led through the gate into the school-yard with the statue of the King-Founder and the entrance to the cloisters under Lupton's tower, from the ground-floor room on the right of which there issued the weird and muffled noises of a not unmelodious flute—sounds that were to become very familiar to me later on, for the room was occupied as a school-room by dear old Herr Schönerstedt, professor of Hebrew and German, who, like Tityrus and Frederic the Great, used to solace his leisure hours, which were many, with a flute.

Thence into the playing fields, in which the elms planted in Charles the First's time, then at the zenith of their pride, now all dead and gone, were just putting forth their summer plumage; Fellows' Pond, with a lazy pike or two basking on the surface; Poet's Walk, Sixth Form Bench, and above all, the glory of Windsor Castle, most regal of palaces, towering above the Thames. How beautiful it all was, and how romantic! The fairies must have been tripping in rings on the turf, the dryads tempted out of their barken hiding-places, the water-nymphs making high festival on the silver flood, so radiantly joyous was the day!

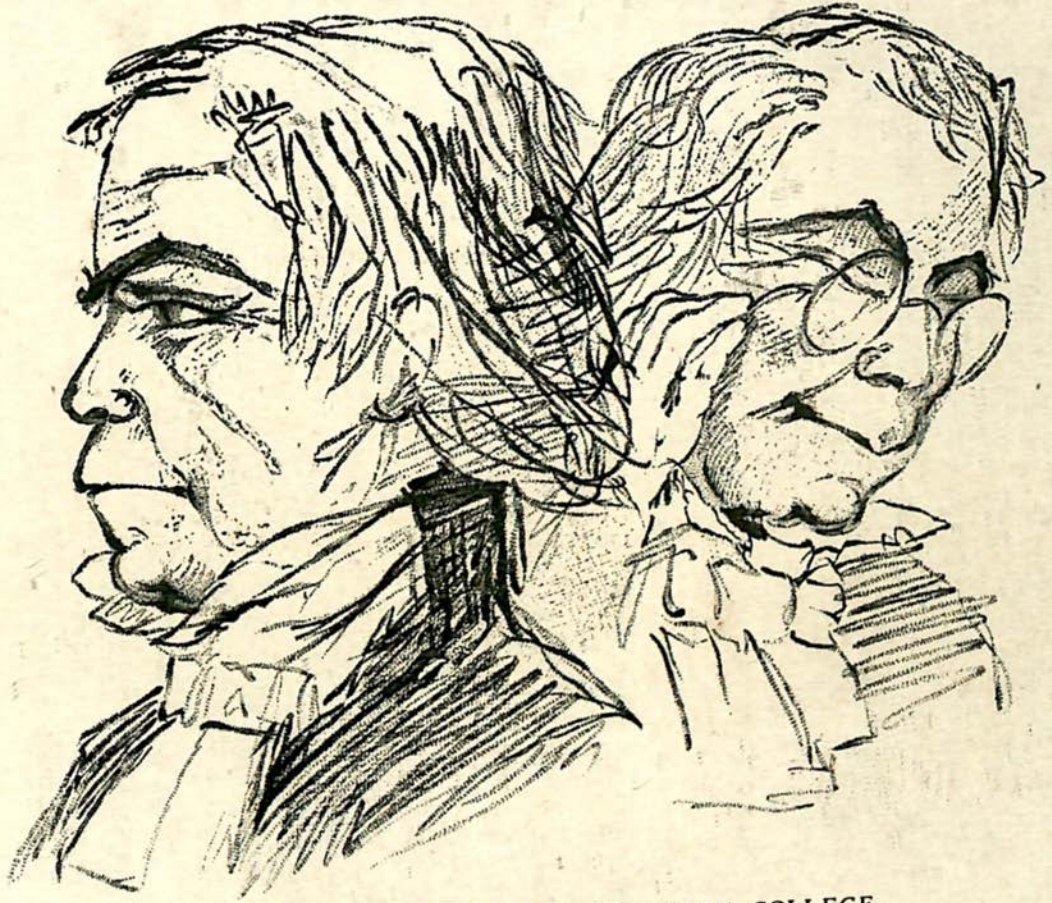
We lingered under the one oak tree standing in lonely majesty on the river bank, trying in vain to dip its boughs into the ripples on which the sunbeams were dancing; we looked at Lord Wellesley's weeping willows (I wonder whether the planting of them by the great Duke's brother might have had some dim connection with St.. Helena). It was delightful wandering through those Elysian fields in which every tree, every corner was a peg upon which our elders could hang a story of thirty years ago—the fields that the Duke of Wellington loved to the end of his days. We were to go to luncheon with the Head Master, my father's old tutor and lifelong friend. He used often to come and see us in the holidays, and so was perhaps not quite such a figure of awe to me as he was to most new boys.

But before penetrating into Weston's Yard, where the new

College buildings had recently been erected, we must cast one glance at the corner of the playing fields known as "Sixpenny" —just below what was then Miss Edgar, the dame's, tumbledown old labyrinth of a house—the classic place for battles in the past, where I was to see many a famous fight in the next few years. From "Sixpenny" it was that in 1825 the great Lord Shaftesbury's younger brother, Francis Ashley, was carried home to die from exhaustion after fighting with a boy of the name of Wood for the best part of two hours. I witnessed three fierce fights that were nearly as bad, and many lesser battles, but the subject is only worth alluding to because it is dead. There is no fighting now, I believe; perhaps, savage as it may seem to say so, that is not altogether an advantage. Dr. Hawtrey once said to me, "If two boys have a quarrel I would rather see them fight it out. They shake hands afterwards, and become firm friends; but this grudge-bearing is dreadful and has no end."

Boys form great friendships at school; they also form great antipathies. There was a boy at Eton, a few years older than myself, who was an arch-bully. For some reason he bore me a special spite; his methods of torture were curious and ingenious. If I saw him in the distance I fled. I have heard that he is a good, gentle, harmless old gentleman, a kind landlord, a Chairman of a Board of Guardians, greatly respected—but I should still dread to meet him.

Venerable and imposing, very dear to us who loved him well, was the figure of Edward Craven Hawtrey, the Head Master of Eton. He was not a handsome man, indeed so far as features were concerned; he was distinctly the reverse; but he was tall and upright, with the dignity of a commander of boys or men. When he called Absence on the Chapel steps, dressed in his cassock and doctor's gown, his presence was imposing. When he went out walking his attire was scrupulously neat, with as much smartness as might become a cleric of high degree. He always wore a frock-coat with a deep velvet collar, with which the high white cravat of those days and his silver hair, worn slightly, but not unduly long, made a fine contrast. Skilled "in the nice conduct of a clouded cane," he looked essentially a gentleman, a clergyman



EDWARD CRAVEN HAWTREY, D.D., ETON COLLEGE.

(A sketch by a sixth form boy.)

of the best old school. He was a traveller, a man of the world and a linguist, proficient in French, German and Italian, able to hold his own, and always welcome, in the political and learned society of many continental cities and universities. His personality was as well known in Paris, Rome, and the great German towns as in London or at Windsor.

To be a good head master of Eton demands many qualifications. Dr. Hawtrey had them all; he seemed born for the post, so admirably did he fit it. His hospitality was unbounded, and when on a great gala day like the Fourth of June he welcomed as guests many of the greatest people of the kingdom, it was a lesson to see the lofty yet kindly courtesy with which he maintained the dignity of what he justly conceived to be his great office. His tall, stately figure stalking amongst the smartly millinered ladies in his little slip of a garden was indeed princely.

Later in life I met him in Paris, surrounded by some of the most notable men of the day, leaders of thought, who rejoiced in the society of the great head master, and in listening to his cultured, many-sided, cosmopolitan talk. He was equally at home in more frivolous surroundings. He was welcome everywhere; at a gathering at Stafford House he would wander through the famous galleries, a pet guest of the great Duchess Harriet, stopped every here and there by some reigning beauty, eager to greet and make much of the genial old man of whom she had heard so many kindly tales from husband or brothers, the old boys whom he loved and who loved him. Queen Victoria had the greatest regard for him, and it was his inspiration which induced Prince Albert to found the Prince Consort's prizes for modern languages at Eton—a princely boon as wise as it was generous.

I was often invited to his breakfast parties, which were interesting feasts, for he frequently had some man of note staying with him. More than once I met Guizot there after the collapse of the monarchy in 1848—a quiet, grey-haired old gentleman whom it was difficult to imagine facing the stormy Chamber with his famous "Criez, messieurs! hurlez! vos cris n'atteindront jamais le niveau de mon dédain!"

Monsieur de Circourt was another friend of Hawtrey's. One

morning at breakfast—it must have been about the year '50 or '51—the Irish famine was being discussed. M. de Circourt, who prided himself on his knowledge of England, and more especially of our language, startled the table by saying: "But why did you not feed zem wiz mice?" (maize). The host without a smile answered: "Oh! but we did send them quantities of Indian corn," and so cleverly turning the difficulty, saved his guest's face.

His wit was very ready—and would sometimes manifest itself in very unexpected moments. On one occasion, a boy of the name of Bosanquet was sent up to the Head Master for execution. The paraphernalia of doom were all in order; the block was drawn out from the wall, and two small collegers stood beside it—the holders-down. The sixth form Præpositor handed the rod to the Doctor with the "bill" upon which were written the names of the victims. Hawtrey read out: "Bŏsānquet!" The boy corrected him rather pertly: "Please, sir, my name is Bōsănquĕt not Bŏsānquet.

"Sive tu mavis Bōsănquĕt vocari
Sive Bŏsānquĕt,"*

answered Hawtrey, pointing majestically to the block with his long rod. He was so pleased with his neat paraphrase of Horace that the metrically injured boy got off very cheap.

One night three boys, Gerry Goodlake, who afterwards won the V.C. at the battle of the Alma, Suttie and another whose name I have forgotten, got out of their tutor's (Elliot's) house, disguised as navvies, went up town and procured a liberal supply of the materials necessary for the brewing of a bowl of rum punch, with which they managed, as they hoped unseen, to get back into their rooms. Unfortunately for them old Bott, the good old Waterloo man who was the College policeman, had marked them down, and at the moment when the brew was steaming fragrance in walked the tutor. The result was, of course, an execution, the anticipation of which aroused such a fever in the school that many boys committed small crimes in the hope of having a fine view of the tragedy at the expense of the traditional four cuts of the birch.

* "Sive tu Lucina probas vocari,
Seu Genitalis."—Horace, "Carmen Seculare," 15.

Hawtrey was bewildered by the number of "bills" that kept coming in; but he knew his boys and he smelt a rat, so he decided to hold the great execution *à huis clos*, divided the remaining "complaints" into two halves—kept one half himself to be dealt with at future "after schools," and sent the other half down to Dickie Okes* to be attended to in lower school. Great was the disappointment of the bloodthirsty little villains at the Doctor's cleverness.

In Sir Henry Maxwell Lyte's otherwise admirable "History of Eton College" there is one great blemish in the very niggardly praise, or perhaps it would be more truthful to say the very liberal dispraise, which is attached to Hawtrey's scholarship. We are continually being told that it was inaccurate. In one very unjust passage it is contended in addition "that he was not thoroughly well-informed, though he spent thirty thousand pounds on books;" that "he could not estimate correctly the intellectual development of younger men, though he corresponded with the leaders of England and France;" that "he was not qualified to train schoolboys, like Vaughan and Kennedy," etc., etc., etc.

Not for one moment would I detract from the teaching of those great masters. All that I care to insist upon is the immense value of Hawtrey's teaching, equally as good as theirs, though different; the boys felt that his object was not so much to make the divine poetry of the Greeks nothing but a peg upon which to hang a discussion on grammatical problems, but in addition to reveal the soul which animated the work, and so to arouse a love of philology, lighting in the young minds of his scholars the same spark of enthusiasm which had been the beacon illuminating and making beautiful his own life. Surely if this be dilettantism, it is also that which draws the highest value out of what is called a classical education. Profoundly versed in the European classics, he was able to illustrate his lectures by quotations from French, German, and Italian sources, and so by his observations in comparative criticism he would galvanize into new life the beauties of the ancient writers, redeeming them from that deterrent dullness which attaches to what are looked upon as lessons. The result of his teaching can

* The lower master; afterwards Provost of King's College, Cambridge.

be seen by the great position attained by his pupils in their after life in the great world.

As an older boy, and later as a young man, I often had the chance of listening to his talk upon classical subjects, which was in the highest degree interesting and stimulating. I only wish that Sir Henry Maxwell Lyte had had the same opportunity; I think that his estimate of Dr. Hawtrey would have been very different. There was something bright and sunny and joyous in his scholarship, which was absolutely free from all pedantry, and was totally different from that of the two men who preceded and followed him in his office.

Dr. Keate was a stern, severe disciplinarian; indeed, in the remembrance of his severity people are apt to forget that he was famous for sound and accurate scholarship. Dr. Goodford, too, was a great scholar, but his learning was rather of a dull, dry-as-dust type. In his classes the Greek particles reigned supreme—imagination, the winged child of the muses, flew away into space, scared by the digamma. It used to be said that his children, aged five and six, were translating Plato, while the poodle dog looked out the words in Liddell and Scott's dictionary—then, by the bye, a new apparition.

Hawtrey, on the contrary, was full of fun—witness some of his translations in the "Arundines Cami." He could turn an epigram in French, Italian or German such as would deceive the very elect into the belief that it was the work of a native; some of his Italian poems, privately printed, won special praise from those best capable of judging. His appreciation of wit was alive to the last. When he was already a very old man, and I a clerk in the Foreign Office, I remember the enthusiasm with which he welcomed the arrival of Mrs. Poyser to enrich the gaiety of the world. It was this spirit of fun which enabled him to enter into the wildest pranks of his boys—so long as they were harmless.

Windsor Fair, held in Bachelor's Acre, was a forbidden playground for the younger boys. The sixth form, on the other hand, went there to act as police. Once I had been sent for to dine with the Head Master, with whom my father was staying during the Fair time. He came in rather late, dressed in cap and gown,

laughing merrily, and carrying half a dozen penny dolls, monkey-sticks, and toys which had been laid upon his desk. "What in the name of wonder have you got there?" asked my father. "I always get my fairings," he said. He made the life of a pedagogue a life of sympathy and good comradeship, and so a life of joy for all who came under his kindly rule. What wonder that he was adored?

After all, the worth of the work for good or for evil which has been done by an administrator must be judged by the fruit which it has borne. How did Hawtrey find Eton? how did he leave it? Happily we are able to call upon a great and unimpeachable witness. It was Hawtrey who first sent up for good Mr. Gladstone. "It was," he writes, "an event in my life. He and it together then for the first time inspired me with a desire to learn and to do." Again—"The popular supposition is" (Mr. Gladstone, January 3, 1890), "that Eton from 1830 onwards was swept along by a tide of renovation due to the fame and contagious example of Dr. Arnold. But this, in my opinion, is an error. Eton was in a singularly small degree open to influence from other public schools. There were three persons to whom Eton was more indebted than any others for the new life poured into her arteries: Dr. Hawtrey, the contemporary Duke of Newcastle, and Bishop Selwyn."*

In 1846, the year of which I am writing, mathemathics were no part of the school curriculum, which remained untouched as it had been from all time. Hawtrey in 1851 made mathematics compulsory, to the intense disgust of all us, little conservatives to the core, who considered that the knowledge that two and two make four might be an accomplishment, but formed no part of the education of a gentleman. He substituted competition for nomination to scholarships on the foundation. He fostered the study of modern languages, promoted examinations, and did all that was in his power to bring Eton up to the standard required by modern advancement and culture.

His greatest feat, achieved in the face of cruel unpopularity, was the abolition of Montem. He was wise enough to see that a custom,

* "Dictionary of National Biography."

kindly and picturesque in old days, must, with the arrival of the railway, which did away with all the privacy of Eton, degenerate into an ugly saturnalia. So long as the festival was confined to the friends and relations of the boys, it was all very well to collect from parents, old boys and their friends "Salt," a sum destined to help the senior colleger in his first year at Cambridge. But now, with the influx of a mob from London, it must become a degradation. Many influences were against him, not in Eton alone, but in the greater world outside; wisely he stuck to his guns, and Montem ceased to exist. Generous as always, when the triennial feast came round in 1847, he gave, out of his own purse, to the parents of the boy who would have profited by the "Salt" a present of three hundred pounds. How strong the feeling was is shown by the fact that on that day some of the masters were stoned on their way to school. It is only fair to say that Provost Hodgson, who succeeded Goodall, backed up the Head Master in this crisis.

I may record another instance of his large-hearted love of giving. An old friend and colleague of his had got himself into financial difficulties. Hawtrey could not see the home of a brilliant man broken up and himself brought to a pecuniary misery. He paid up all debts and set his friend free. He was rewarded by the blackest and most treacherous ingratitude. He never uttered a reproach, but I have reason to know that he was cut to the quick. He suffered in silence.

Such was the dear old man who bent down to welcome me, the little boy whom he had known in petticoats, on my first entry into his kingdom. Smiling and laughing, brimming over with kindness, he regaled me with all sorts of delightful old-time tales of his own school days, little experiences all chosen because in them there was just a taste of schoolboy wisdom: some useful hint conveyed with fun and merriment; advice not flung like a cricket ball at the youngster's head, but just brought out in such a way as to be reassuring and encouraging. That luncheon was a memorable episode in a memorable day, and it was the first link in a long chain of kindnesses which lasted during the eight years that I was at Eton, and did not abate until the good man's death in 1862.

The consulate of Dr. Hawtrey was a time of transition at Eton as elsewhere. The Eton to which I was sent in 1846 differed in little from that which my father had known some thirty years earlier. With the exception of the new College buildings, only just finished, in Weston's Yard, the outer aspect of the place had undergone no change. There were the same old tumbledown, crazy tenements with weather-stained walls and patched roofs, occupied by tutors and dames. All the sanitary arrangements—save the word!—were primitively disgusting. Baths were unknown. During the summer months, by the grace of Father Thames, there was bathing in Cuckoo Weir, at Upper Hope, and at Athens, but from September till about May foot-tubs of hot water carried to the various rooms on a Saturday night represented all the cleanliness that was deemed necessary.

The Reform Act and new forces, born of railways and machinery, and what were by many derided as new-fangled fads of hygiene were compelling and irresistible. During the last two years of my schoolboyhood the cold tub had become an institution of every morning. Many other improvements were in progress and have long since been carried out.

The head master's house, if an anachronism, was eminently fitted to its venerable and book-loving tenant. It still stands, a picturesque building of which the red bricks and tiles have grown hoary with age, long, low and rambling, flush with the Slough Road on one side, separated on the other from Weston's Yard by a narrow strip of garden. It was so shallow that, like Hampton Court, Berkeley Castle, and many old-fashioned buildings, it consisted only of a succession of rooms leading into one another. On the first floor a very meagre passage had been negotiated, so as to give some privacy to bedrooms, but on the ground floor there was nothing but a chain of rooms. From floor to ceiling every room was lined with bookcases criss-crossed with thick brass wires, in which the treasures which were the accumulation of a lifetime were amassed. Even the bedrooms were fitted in the same way. It was one huge library.

I do not remember any works of art or ornaments with the exception of one of Wedgwood's copies of the Portland Vase. When Provost Hodgson died on the 29th of December, 1852, Dr. Hawtrey

succeeded him. The drop in income was considerable, and he had been too large a giver to have saved anything. A great portion of the library had to be sold, and it went for what even at that time was a song. What would it have been worth now? Before changing over into the Provost's lodge, Dr. Hawtrey sent for me and gave me, as a keepsake in memory of many happy days spent with him among his books, a beautiful little Elzevir Livy. To my father, his old pupil, he gave a grand copy of Tasso.

The house is very old, having been occupied by Sir Henry Savile, the handsome lay Provost whose appointment by Queen Elizabeth in May, 1596, "any statute, act or canon to the contrary notwithstanding," raised a small storm. Here he set up his printing-press, and in 1613 published his great edition of S. Chrysostom in eight folio volumes. He also printed Xenophon's "Cyropædia" and Thomas Bradwardine's "De Causâ Dei contra Pelagium." With the Provostship of Eton he combined the office of Warden of Merton College at Oxford.

Probably no private house can claim such a connection with books and letters. For many years now it has been occupied by the Precentor, Dr. Law—and it seems likely to remain the official home of music.

Hawtrey's reforms would probably have been carried out much sooner—perhaps even Keate might have fathered some of them—but Provost Goodall, a grand and courtly gentleman of the old school, had the faults of his qualities; he was the deadly enemy of change; he was one of those men to whom progress means disaster, and having the might to spoke the wheels of the coach, he used it with such effect that Hawtrey was practically powerless. But in 1840 Provost Goodall died, and after some troüble between the Court and the Fellows, the candidate favoured by Queen Victoria was appointed, and Archdeacon Hodgson, the intimate friend of Lord Byron, became Provost.

Lyte's history shows how keenly the new Provost set to work to improve the position of the collegers, and how ably he was seconded by Hawtrey. The new buildings in Weston's Yard were the result, and they, with the two red-brick houses by Keate s Lane opposite upper school, were the only substantial additions made to

the College since the early days of the nineteenth century. The two doughty champions worked well together—Hodgson for the much-wronged collegers; Hawtrey determined that Eton should no longer be a mere school of ornamental classical culture for the small minority who could or would take advantage of it, but should march with the times, and give a boy such an education as would fit him to play a practical part in a world which was beginning to be very much on the move.

It is almost incredible in these days that, as I have said above, until the year 1851 mathematics were no part of the school work. French, German and Italian were, needless to say, in the same boat. That Frenchmen should exist and have a language of their own was, however deplorable, an admitted fact, but only on condition that one Englishman should be equal to four Frenchmen, or, according to Boswell in his adulation of Johnson, forty. Such were the archaic doctrines in which we were brought up, until wise Dr. Hawtrey swept all the old cobwebs away.

When at last mathematics were introduced, Mr. Stephen Hawtrey, a cousin of the Doctor's, who had been a high wrangler at Cambridge, was appointed master. In order to parcel out the boys into divisions under his several assistants he had to hold an examination. Naturally the object of every one of us was to make as bad a show as possible in order to be put into an easy place. When my form came up for *vivâ voce*, question after question did the unhappy man put. No answer. At last in despair he cried: "Is there no boy here who can tell me what twice two makes?" After a pause, "Yes, sir! Please, sir, I can!" said a very cunning little chap called K——. "Well, what is it?" "Five, sir, please, sir!" There were many applauding grins, but for that day Stephanos, as he was called, gave up our form in despair. What troublous days the poor assistant mathematical masters suffered! How they were teased and worried! Very foolishly, the authorities would not give them the same status that the classical masters enjoyed; they were not allowed to wear cap and gown, and might not complain to the Head Master direct. Of course this encouraged the boys to be as rebellious and wicked as they pleased; and being boys, they took royal advantage of it.

Talking of extras, I do not think that many boys in my time learned French; still fewer German. Old Mr. Tarver, of dictionary fame, the French master, was a very charming person, liked by all of us who knew him. His story was curious. He was an Englishman born at Dieppe in 1790. His parents were imprisoned in France in 1793, while he was staying at the house of a friend, M. Féval, who was chief engineer in the Ponts et Chaussées of the Seine Inférieure. When his parents escaped to England he was left behind, and it was not until 1814, after holding various appointments, amongst others that of Secretary to the Admiral of the French fleet at Toulon and in other places, that he was able to seek them out. His father was dead, but his mother was still alive.

After holding different educational posts, amongst others that of tutor to the Duke of Cambridge, he became French master, and held the place for twenty-five years. He died in 1851, and was succeeded by his sons, Henry and Frank. He had a pupil-room in the Christopher Inn Yard, and I used often to go and pay him a little visit, quite apart from lessons, and listen to the stories of his old adventures. One of his sons, Charles, was classical tutor to King Edward when Prince of Wales.

To Herr Schönerstedt and his beloved flute I have already alluded. He was a tall, handsome, very courtly gentleman. If a boy met him in the street he would treat him as ceremoniously as if he were a Russian Grand Duke, never forgetting, even if he were meditating revenge for some crime, to make a sweeping bow and take leave with a grandiloquent "gehorsamer Diener." With Signor Sinibaldi I had little more than a forefinger-to-hat acquaintance.

Such were the materials out of which the new Eton was evolved. All the principal changes took place in my time. I was born under the old dispensation and I lived through the transition stage into the new. Revolutions, even in a school system, are not brought to maturity in a day, and those who read Sir Henry Maxwell Lyte will see that time was needed to make the new machinery work smoothly.

Provost Hodgson, as I recollect him, was a short, fat, sturdy little man, almost as broad as he was long, waddling not without a certain web-footed dignity out of the Provost's Lodge

into Weston's Yard, but how difficult it was to think of him as the cherished friend of the romantic, devil-may-care poet, rebel against all law and convention. Later in life I got to know Lord Broughton. Here again was a contrast with Byron—the reverend, calm, wise and judicious statesman, and the wild, defiant child of genius. Those who cry out so loudly against the unhappy poet might pause and ask themselves whether, since he could inspire undying affection in two such men, he himself could be all bad.

As I have said, we were in a period of transition. There were here and there a few old gentlemen who, clinging desperately to ancient traditions, refused to exchange their knee-breeches with bunches of ribbons at the knee for the vulgar but comfortable trousers. Knee-breeches were the outward and visible sign of obstruction. Among the Fellows of Eton two of these faithful veterans still lived and hindered—Mr. Bethell and Mr. Plumptre. Mr. Bethell was a fine old dignitary of the Church, handsome and well-nourished, with a glowing face and noble paunch, suggestive of a good cook, an excellent digestion, and a well-stored cellar. He was the hero of the crusty old story of the days when he was a master: " 'Ærati postes '—'brazen gates'—very good translation; probably so called because they were made of Brass." He had been a friend of some of my people, so I was sometimes invited to breakfast with him. The rolls were memorable. Mr. Plumptre was famous for sermons of appalling length, preached upon texts that were absolutely grotesque.

Lyte quotes several of these, but this I think is better than any that he gives. Being asked once to preach a sermon to the Blue-coat boys, he took for his text: " Moreover his mother made him a little coat and brought it to him from year to year." As the poor old gentleman had not a tooth left in his head, his sermons, bellowed out at the top of a powerful but very indistinct voice, were exquisitely comic.

Plumptre's defence of Montem is historic; he believed it to have been substituted for a triennial procession in honour of the Virgin Mary, and that therefore it ought to be preserved as a sort of protest

against Popery.* It is only fair to say that in this case and some others Mr. Bethell sided with the Provost and Head Master. The Fellows, however powerful Hodgson and Hawtrey might be, had still a toothless voice in the government of the College. There was a long and tough fight over every innovation, but in the end common sense prevailed over the knee-breeches. It was not long before the last of these disappeared in the waters of Lethe.

After all, they could claim a goodly record for the old dispensation. Even in their own narrow scholastic circle they could point to great teachers like Keate† and Hawtrey; among the assistant masters were Edward Coleridge, a famous tutor, son-in-law of Keate, who certainly came up to the Greek definition of a gentleman: "handsome and good;" Cookesley, a crank, but a brilliant scholar, delighting in Pindar and Greek metrical problems; Carter, clever, but perhaps a little too eager to exact heavy payment for the pleasures of idleness; my own excellent tutor, best and kindest of men, Francis Edward Durnford; Edward Balston, afterwards Head Master, another καλὸς κ' ἀγαθός; William Johnson, who afterwards changed his name to Cory, a sound scholar, and no mean poet. These were all men of a very high standard, the children of the old Eton herself, children of whom the kind mother might well be proud.

But the old school had to take note of a new sharpness in the struggle for life. Not the schoolmaster only, but the examiner, was abroad, and the time had come when every position, no matter how humble, must be won by hard fighting. So the last three years

* See Maxwell Lyte's "History of Eton College," p. 526, Ed. 1899.

† There can be very few people now living who have seen and talked with the famous Dr. Keate, who was nailed in his desk during the great rebellion and flogged eighty boys in one day. My father, on one of his visits to Eton, took me up to see him in the cloisters at Windsor, where he was canon. In appearance he was exactly like the many caricatures that one used to see of him, but the truculent hero of the birch and block, so faithfully painted by Kinglake in "Eothen," had grown into a gentle, mild, little old man, of whom it was difficult to believe that he had ever flogged a boy or uttered a harsh word. He had abandoned "the fancy dress, partly resembling the costume of Napoleon and partly that of a widow woman" ("Eothen," p. 276, Ed. 1896), and was now garbed as a commonplace Early Victorian parson.

FIRE-PLACE IN EVANS' HOUSE.

From a water-colour sketch by W. Evans.

of the eight which I spent at Eton were lived in altered circumstances. Many changes, and doubtless great improvements, have been effected since then, but the first great upheaval took place in 1851 and was due to the genius and foresight of Dr. Hawtrey. Far too much credit for all this has been given to Dr. Goodford. It is true that many alterations took place during his tenure of office, but they had almost all been proposed by Dr. Hawtrey and were only delayed by the obstruction of some of the old men, with Provost Goodall at their head. When Hawtrey became Provost, Goodford's path was smoothed by the very man who had laid its foundation. I, who though a boy or a very young man was much behind the scenes, know to whom the palm was due.

I was still but a small creature, and not very strong, when I went to Evans's, so I was put into the private part of the house, and Miss Jennie Evans, then a tall young lady of about twenty, took me under her wing. About fifty years afterwards, when she had succeeded to her good old father's damery, and I took my boy to be in her house, she said to him, pointing to the staircase: "Many and many a time I have carried your father pick-a-back up those stairs." When she died in January, 1906, the last of the dames, her loss meant the close of a long chapter in the history of Eton. She was a beloved lady.

By degrees I sprouted and grew, and so I was moved into the main body of the house, where I had a snug little room with young Charles Dickens for my next-door neighbour. We soon became allies, and with half a dozen other boys started a little newspaper club which developed into a big success. In the "Dictionary of National Biography" his name is given as "Charles" only. He was christened, as he told me, Charles Boz Dickens. When he was taken to the font on his baptism, and the parson told the godfather to "name this child," the sponsor said "Charles," but the old grandfather, the prototype of Mr. Micawber, as proud as Punch of his already famous son, cried out "Boz," and "Charles Boz" he became accordingly. My friendship with him led to my first acquaintance with his great father, who came down to Eton one fine summer's day, with Mark Lemon and, I think, Shirley Brooks, and took several of us up the river to Maidenhead.

What a day that was! The great man was full of life, bubbling over with fun, the youngest boy of the party. I often met him in after life, but then, wonderful as he was upon occasions, his face when at rest already showed signs of fatigue; the strenuous work had told upon him; he looked careworn and older than his years. I like to think of him as he was on that day at Maidenhead, brilliant, young and gay, the spirit of joy incarnate. It was at the time when he was writing "Bleak House." I never saw his son after our Eton days. He was a clever boy, but he did not achieve as much in life as he might have done; perhaps he never quite found his legs. In letters, no doubt, he felt crushed by his own great name; he went into business, for which it seems he had no aptitude, and he died when still in the prime of life.

Eton has been the Alma Mater of many of the eminent men who have played a foremost part in the history of England. In my day there were many brilliant boys, some of whom distinguished themselves in after life. Of my own immediate contemporaries none could be held to come up to Sir Michael Hicks Beach, now Lord St. Aldwyn. There was no W. E. Gladstone; Lord Salisbury, then Lord Robert Cecil, and Lord Roberts had just left; Arthur Balfour, Lord Rosebery and Lord Randolph Churchill were not yet. Our fellows did well enough, though we did not produce a Phœnix. Alfred Thesiger died as a Lord Justice of Appeal at an age when many men are wondering whether they will ever get a brief.

Montague Williams was famous as a police magistrate; in the Civil Service we could count as permanent heads of departments, Lord Welby at the Treasury, Lord Tenterden, Lord Currie and Lord Sanderson at the Foreign Office, Sir Robert Herbert at the Colonial Office, Sir Charles Rivers Wilson at the National Debt Office, Sir Algernon West at the Inland Revenue, Sir Stevenson Blackwood at the Post Office, followed by Sir Spencer Walpole, who also achieved fame as an historian, Sir Charles Fremantle at the Mint, myself at the Office of Works.

I have heard it objected that Eton's successes are due to the fact that its boys belong to "the governing classes." They forget that for the last fifty years and more the entry into the Civil

Service has been by public examination. I myself entered the Foreign Office by competition just fifty-seven years ago. Even in old days, it was only the first appointments that were given by patronage. The higher posts, what one might call the Staff appointments, were given by selection for merit. Ministers were far too dependent upon the ability and industry of the permanent heads of departments to hamper themselves with incompetent men. Judged at the bar of public opinion, the men whom I have mentioned will not be found wanting.

In politics and diplomacy we could claim our fair share of Cabinet Ministers, Ambassadors and Envoys Extraordinary. Our great president of Pop, Edmond Wodehouse, and his inseparable friend Reginald Yorke were as great in the cricket and football fields as they were in Library, born leaders of boys. Even when he was a lad Wodehouse's speeches, models of the purest English delivered with a gentle musical voice, were very attractive; he was afterwards, as member for Bath, a prominent Liberal Unionist—prominent rather in spite of himself, for he sought no office; and it was a matter of universal opinion that his platform oratory at the time of the split in the Liberal party was second only to that of Mr. Chamberlain. A breakdown in health robbed the State of a great servant—Eton of the fame of an illustrious son. Yorke, after a brilliant outset, gave up public life much too early; he lacked ambition, which, had he possessed it, must have driven him into very high places. He, alas! is no more. When he died I lost a friend of more than sixty years. But when I first went to Eton the idol before whom all we small imps prostrated ourselves was the great Chitty, afterwards Lord Justice of Appeal. He was indeed an Admirable Crichton. Wicket-keeper in the eleven at Eton, he twice played at Lords in the University eleven, the second time as captain Then he took to the river, and stroked the University eight for three years; took a first class and the Vinerian Scholarship, and was for many years umpire to the boat-race of the Blues. Long after he had left we spoke of him with bated breath as fitted to be one of the chosen guests at the banquets of high Olympus. Should we not in the same category, as another Admirable Crichton, place

Dr. Warre, scholar, athlete, Head Master—Provost? He was in the same division as myself.

Of all the boys of my time who made a name for themselves in the world by far the most remarkable was my cousin Algernon Charles Swinburne, that wayward child of the Muses. I am glad to know that his life is being written by a brother poet, a foremost man of letters, who knew him intimately in his most brilliant days, a man who is possessed of all those qualities which Dr. Johnson deemed to be indispensable in a good biographer. Mr. Gosse, knowing my relationship to Swinburne, asked me to furnish him with some particulars as to the poet's schoolboy life; this I did in a letter written partly in answer to some foolish misstatements which appeared in a letter from another schoolfellow written to the *Times*.

I was in hopes that Mr. Gosse, who printed the letter in a short biographical sketch which he issued privately in 1912, would have done me the honour of including my notice in the larger book upon which he is engaged. He, however, very generously insists that I must take back my humble gift, and make it part of my sketch of Eton. It would be churlish to refuse to obey the behest of so good a friend, and so I append from my letter to him such extracts as seem to be to the point. But how proud should I have been had they appeared for the first time under his ægis!

Swinburne entered Eton at the beginning of the summer half of 1849. His father the Admiral, a scion of the grand old Northumbrian family, and my aunt, Lady Jane, brought him, and at once sent for me to put him under my care. I was "to look after him." It is true that I was only a few weeks older than himself, and so, physically, not much of a protector; but I had been three years at school, to which I was sent when I was nine years old, so I knew my Eton thoroughly, and was well versed in all its dear, delightful ways—mysteries bewildering to the uninitiated. I was already a little man of the world, at any rate of that microcosm which is a public school, and so I was able to steer my small cousin through some shoals.

What a fragile little creature he seemed as he stood there between

his father and mother with his wondering eyes fixed upon me! Under his arm he hugged his Bowdler's Shakespeare, a very precious treasure bound in brown leather with, for a marker, a narrow slip of ribbon—blue I think—with a button of that most heathenish marqueterie called Tunbridge ware dangling from the end of it. He was strangely tiny. His limbs were small and delicate, and his sloping shoulders looked far too weak to carry his great head, the size of which was exaggerated by the tousled mass of red hair standing almost at right angles to it. Hero-worshippers talk of his hair as having been a "golden aureole." At that time there was nothing golden about it. Red, violent, aggressive red it was, unmistakable red, burnished copper. His features were small and beautiful, chiselled as daintily as those of some Greek sculptor's masterpiece.

His skin was very white—not unhealthy, but a transparent tinted white such as one sees in the petals of some roses. His face was the very replica of that of his dear mother, and she was one of the most refined and lovely of women. What the colour of his eyes was I never knew—grey, green or brown, they reflected his mood and must have been of the same colour that his soul was at that moment; they could be soft and tender, blaze with rage, or sparkle with fire. His red hair must have come from the Admiral's side, for I never heard of a red-haired Ashburnham. The Admiral himself, whom I rarely saw, was, so well as my memory serves me, already grizzled, but his hair must have been originally very fair or even red.

Another characteristic which Algernon inherited from his mother was the voice. All who knew him must remember that exquisitely soft voice with a rather sing-song intonation, like that of the Russians when they put the music of their own Slav voices into the French language. All his mother's brothers and sisters had it. He alone, so far as I know, among my cousins reproduced it. Listening to him sometimes I could almost fancy that I could hear my aunt herself speaking, so startling was the likeness. His language, even at that age, was beautiful, fanciful, and richly varied. Altogether my recollection of him in those school-days is that of a fascinating, most lovable little fellow. It is

but a child's impression of another child, but I believe it to be just.

That morning, after the manner of little dogs and little boys, we stood and looked at one another shyly, suspiciously; but by the time his parents left we had become fast friends and so we remained. We had something in common to make us sib besides the sisterhood of his mother and mine. On our fathers' side we both came from old Northumbrian stocks, and there is something in the Borderland which makes for a feeling of kinship, even if in ancient times there should have been blood feuds. Under the spell of the Border feeling Swinburne was bewitched; it never lost its power over him. The wind blowing over those wild moors, which are still the home of legends and ballads of raids and fights and deeds of derring-do, had pierced his soul. He was a true son of Northumbria, and was eager to become a soldier and bear arms; little creature as he was, had he lived in the old days, he would have carried a stout heart into any fray where there might be the clash of steel against morion and breastplate, leading a troop of his own people like Barry of the Comb, or Corbit Jock, in an expedition over the Border against Eliots and Kers, and Scots and Maxwells. He was born three centuries too late.

Of course, being in different houses, we could not be so constantly together as if we had both been in the same house. I was at Evans's and Durnford was my tutor. He was at Joynes's and of course Joynes was his tutor. Still we often met, and pretty frequently breakfasted together, he with me, or I with him. Chocolate in his room, tea in mine. The guest brought his own "order" of rolls and butter, and the feast was made rich by the addition of sixpennyworth of scraped beef or ham from Joe Groves's, a small sock-shop which was almost immediately under Joynes's house. Little gifts such as our humble purses could afford cemented our friendship; I still possess and treasure an abbreviated edition of Froissart's Chronicles which Algernon gave me now, alas! sixty-six years ago. We ourselves were abbreviated editions in those days, or rather duodecimos!

It was at Eton that he began to feel his wings. His bringing up at home had been scrupulously strict—his literary diet the

veriest pap. His precocious brain had been nourished upon food for babes. Not a novel had he been allowed to open, not even Walter Scott's. Shakespeare he only knew through the medium of his precious brown Bowdler. Now he could travel over all the wide range of the boys' library, which was then alongside of the entrance to the Provost's Lodge in Weston's Yard.

I can see him now, sitting perched up Turk-or-tailor-wise in one of the windows looking out on the Yard, with some huge old-world tome almost as big as himself on his lap, the afternoon sun setting on fire the great mop of red hair. There it was that he emancipated himself, making acquaintance with Shakespeare (minus Bowdler), Marlowe, Spenser, Ben Jonson, Ford, Massinger, Beaumont and Fletcher, and the other poets and playwrights of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. His tendency was greatly towards the drama, especially the Tragic Drama. He had a great sense of humour in others; he worshipped Dickens and would quote him (especially Mrs. Gamp) unwearyingly; but his own genius leaned to Tragedy.

It is absurd to pretend, as was said in a letter to the *Times*, that as a boy "he had an extraordinarily wide knowledge of the Greek poets, which he read with ease in the original." His study of the Greek tragedians, upon whose work he so largely modelled his own, came much later in life. At Eton these were lessons, and lessons are odious; besides no one can assimilate Æschylus in homœopathic doses of thirty lines, and he knew no more Greek than any intelligent boy of his age would do, nor did he take any prominent part in the regular school work, though he was a Prince Consort's prizeman for modern languages. His first love in literature was given to the English poets, and after or together with these he devoured the great classics of France and Italy. The foundations of his searching knowledge of the French and Italian languages were laid by his accomplished mother. Of German he was ignorant, so Goethe, Schiller, Herder, Wieland were sealed books to him. We may doubt whether they would have appealed to him, for he was essentially a classicist; he might have been better in touch with Schlegel and Novalis, as more nearly akin to the romanticists whom he loved, among whom

Victor Hugo was the object of his special reverence; but that which I should call the Gothic in literature might never have existed for aught that he cared.

How much he owed to his mother! Lady Jane was an attractive and most distinguished woman. Her conversation was delightful, for her mind was a rich storehouse of all that was good and beautiful, and her rare gift of imparting what she knew was reflected in the bright light of the genius of her son and pupil.

His memory was wonderful, his power of quotation almost unlimited. We used to take long walks together in Windsor Forest and in the Home Park, where the famous oak of Herne the Hunter was still standing, a white, lightning-blasted skeleton of a tree, a fitting haunt for "fairies black, grey, green and white," and a very favourite goal of our expeditions. As he walked with his peculiar dancing gait, tripping along like a young faun, his eyes gleaming with enthusiasm, his whole body quivering with excitement, and his hair, like the *zazzera* of his own beloved old Florentines, tossed about by the wind, he would pour out with that unforgettable voice of his the treasures which he had gathered at his last sitting in his favourite window-nook.

Other boys would watch him with amazement, looking upon him as a sort of inspired elfin—a changeling from another sphere. None dreamt of interfering with him, and as for bullying, there was none of it. He carried with him one magic charm—he was absolutely brave. He did not know what fear meant. It is generally the coward, the weakling in character, far more than the weakling in thews and sinews, that is bullied. Swinburne's pluck as a boy always reminds me of Kinglake's description in "Eothen" of Dr. Keate, the famous Head Master of Eton: "He was little more (if more at all) than five feet in height, and was not very great in girth, but within this space was concentrated the pluck of ten battalions." That might have been written of Swinburne, and tiny as he was, I verily believe that had any boy, however big, attempted to bully him, that boy would have caught a Tartar.

Of games he took no heed—they were not for his frail build; football and cricket were nothing to him. I do not think that he ever possessed a cricket bat; but he could swim like any frog and

of walking he never tired. And so he led a sort of charmed life, dreaming and reading, and chewing the cud of his gleanings from the world-harvest of poetry, a fairy child in the midst of a commonplace, workaday world—as Horace said of himself, " non sine Dîs animosus infans."

I have spoken of his courage. He was no horseman, and had but little opportunity at home for riding, but in the matter of horses he was absolutely without terror. Unskilled as he was, he would back anything, as fearless as a centaur. As a boy, rides with his cousin, Lady Katherine Ashburnham, were among his great delights in that glorious, forest-like country about Ashburnham Place. My uncle, the great book-lover, had an instinctive appreciation of his genius long before he was famous, and always had a welcome for him.

There is no truth in the story, coined I know not how, that Swinburne disliked Eton. The poet was not made of the stuff which moulds the enthusiastic schoolboy, and I much doubt whether any school would, as such, have appealed to him. But Eton stands by itself. Its old traditions and its chivalrous memories, its glorious surroundings, meant for him something more than mere school: his mind dwelt upon the old grey towers, Windsor, the Forest, the Brocas, the Thames, Cuckoo Weir, with an affection which inspired his " Commemoration Ode," and which, I believe, never left him. The place touched his poet's soul as no other school could have done, and so it fitted him.

Across all these decades I look back to the time when he and I were very small boys. There came a moment when fate drove us apart. We never had a quarrel, and no cross word ever passed between us, but I became a colleger, and between collegers and oppidans there was a great gulf fixed. By the time that I once more went back to be an oppidan, Swinburne had left Eton and our paths in life drifted further and further apart. Only once in after life did we meet. It was one evening at dinner at Whistler's. We went on one side together after dinner, and had one of those long talks over old days that are dear to schoolfellows' hearts. We arranged to meet again a few days later, but he was ailing, and could not keep the appointment—alas! *Sunt lachrymæ rerum!*

I never saw him again. He lies in the lovely churchyard at Bonchurch with his father and the mother whom he tenderly loved, within sound of the roaring of the sea which during all his life was to him the sweetest of God's music.

I have only noticed the most prominent of my schoolmates, but there is one more whom I must mention, Sir Francis Burnand, who for so many years led the merriment of the nation. Did I talk of memories? Here at least is no memory, but a "happy thought," for he still lives, as gay, as bright, as laughter-loving and laughter-compelling as when he was a fourth-form boy. He remains the real Peter Pan, the boy who will not grow old.

If it be true that the mountains in labour produce a ridiculous mouse, it is equally true that out of the smallest of molehills there are sometimes born colossal elephants. Some time in 1848 there appeared one day as a new boy a tall, handsome slip of a lad, very good-natured, very raw, fresh caught from Australia, as green as young wheat—George Salting. He was a good deal chaffed, never teased or bullied, he was too good for that. The spirit of the collector was born in him, and the foundation of the treasures which he amassed was laid in the purchase of half a walnut-shell. It happened in this wise. We lower boys used to delight at the proper season of the year in fighting one shell against another. The conquering shell had the right to lay to its account not only the beaten enemy but also all the other shells which that particular enemy had defeated. One day there appeared at "the wall" in Long Walk a famous "cad" of those days, who produced a half-shell which had gained a thousand victories. Salting, always plentifully provided with money, gave five shillings for it.

Alas! the champion was shortly afterwards dethroned by a vulgar novice which had come into its owner's possession in the ordinary course of eating. Goliath was not a greater disappointment to the Philistine army. But, never mind! out of that wonderful walnut-shell came in due course all the gems with which the National Gallery and the Victoria and Albert Museum have been enriched. Stand before Holbein's miniature of Anne of Cleves, Henry the

Eighth's "great Flanders mare," and think of that. From the walnut-shell, to borrow the famous word of Maréchal Macmahon, he continued,* and if in his early days as a collector he was often a prey to unscrupulous dealers, he ended by gaining experience and became a good judge. Many were the practical jokes of which, as a boy, he was the good-humoured victim.

One fine September evening—it must have been in 1850 or 1851; we had just come back from the summer holidays—a knot of younger boys were gathered together at the end of Keate's Lane, and there was a grand recital of all the great events that had happened in the halcyon days. One boy had killed a salmon, another had been out cub-hunting, a third had been out partridge-shooting with his father on the 1st. Salting announced that he too had been out shooting on the 1st. He was asked what he had shot.

"I shot a yellowhammer," was the answer.

"What!" cried a small mosquito, "you don't mean to say that! Don't you know what you have done?" (Salting turned a little pale.) "Don't you know that after the battle of Waterloo King George the Third gave the Duke of Wellington the exclusive privilege of shooting yellowhammers on the first of September? You had better write an apology at once, or there's no saying what may happen." All the boys put on very serious faces, and poor Salting was fairly terrified. A letter was drafted in which Mr. Salting presented his compliments to Field-Marshal the Duke of Wellington, K.G., and in stilted terms implored forgiveness for an offence unwittingly given. Two or three days later the answer came in which Field-Marshal the Duke of Wellington presented *his* compliments to Mr. Salting, with the assurance that in the circumstances, etc., etc. The offence was solemnly forgiven. Two Sundays later I was invited by old Sir Charles Mills, grandfather of the present Lord Hillingdon, to dine and sleep at Hillingdon. Mr. Algernon Greville, the Duke's private secretary, was there. I asked

* At a distribution of prizes at one of the public schools at Paris, as boy after boy was brought up, he said, "Continuez, jeune homme! Premier prix de mathématiques, très bien. Continuez, jeune homme." At last a Haytian boy was brought up to him. "Ah, c'est vous le nègre. Continuez, jeune homme, continuez!"

him whether the Duke of Wellington had really received and answered the letter. Mr. Greville said that the Duke had not only received the letter, but, suspecting the joke, and greatly amused by it, insisted on answering it himself. Here would have been a beginning for a collection of autographs! But Salting's tutor got hold of the letter and kept it!

To the end of his life I kept up a sort of fitful friendship with that amiable man. Slim, tall, and handsome in appearance, he altered very little. The last time that I saw him was not very long before his death. I met him in King Street, just outside Christie and Manson's, where some sale was going on. We stopped and talked, and I could not help noticing that, barring the long beard, it was still the old Salting of the yellowhammer days.

There was one project which lay very near to Dr. Hawtrey's heart. Between the oppidans and the collegers there was a great gulf fixed. To bridge this over was his ambition. I have shown how Provost Hodgson and he had done much to improve the lives of the boys on the foundation. It had cost them infinite pains, and in his case great pecuniary sacrifices; of that he took little heed, for he was always open-handed, and to give was for him a necessity. By curtailing the Long Chamber and the erection of the new buildings in Weston's Yard, and by other corollary reforms, they had given the collegers a measure of decency and comfort which they had never enjoyed before. Hawtrey thought that the time had come when, with the help of these altered conditions, he could amalgamate Eton into one uniform whole, collegers and oppidans, one body with one soul and one spirit, all invidious distinctions swept away, all jealousies stifled and done with. His plan was to get a number of boys who had already been some years in the school and had therefore made their friends among the oppidans to compete for college. He thought that in this way he would be introducing a leaven of intimacy between the two camps. In my time, at any rate, it was a complete failure. The only result was that the newcomers lost their oppidan friends, while from the old college hands they received but a cold welcome. I was one of the vile bodies upon which the experiment was tried, and that is how I lost my intimacy with Swinburne.

Dr. Hawtrey's influence with my father was immense, and for some two years I became a colleger. I can honestly say that during that time I never was inside any oppidan's room, nor do I remember ever having an oppidan to visit me, or any other colleger. During the last year and a half of my Eton days, when I was already in sixth form, I went back to be an oppidan, and Evans's house being full, was sent to Mrs. Voysey's, who was a new dame. In the meantime Provost Hodgson had died in 1852, and was succeeded by Dr. Hawtrey, to my deep regret, for he was followed as Head Master by Dr. Goodford, and in a schoolroom over which that dull and drowsy man presided there was little joy.

Once, I remember, he woke up from one of his naps (vigilant naps they were, for if one of us blundered he was wide-awake in a moment), and was minded to be grotesquely humorous. Someone was construing, I forget what, when all of a sudden he suggested as a translation, "Oh, dear! what can the matter be?" and asked whether any of us could quote the next line. One suggested a repetition of the same line; another "Johnnie's so long at the fair." "Wrong! Quite wrong," he said, "the second line is '*Dear! Dear!* What can the matter be?'" Dismally he grinned at his own fun, which did not raise even a sycophantic smile, and then composed himself once more to "yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep." And so the dreary pedagogic round droned on. What would I not give now to have had the privilege of passing that year and a half under the illuminating tuition of Dr. Hawtrey! What a gift to be able to teach and n teaching please—practically to strike out from the dictionary the hateful word "lessons!"

CHAPTER IV

SUMMER HOLIDAYS

"CRETÂ AN CARBONE NOTANDI?" The summer holidays of 1851 shall be "noted" with the whitest of chalk. The first three or four days were spent in London exploring the treasures and wonders of the Fairy Palace which the imagination of the Prince Consort and the talent of Paxton called up in Hyde Park—of which Sydenham gives no conception. It was but a baby compared with the great exhibitions—labyrinthine cities in themselves—by which it was followed—but it was so graceful, so delicate, so airy, that its translucent beauty remains graven on my memory as something which must defy all rivalry. When first I saw it glittering in the morning sun, I felt as if Aladdin and the Jin who was the slave of the lamp must have been at work upon it —no mere human hands and hammers and builders' tools could have wrought such a miracle. A single relic marks the site: one of the two great elms which were enclosed in it, now a feeble old truncated pollard, piously fenced in by the care of those who rule the Park, still stands in the great stretch of grass opposite the Knightsbridge Barracks; its mate sickened and died.

There were two exhibits which struck my boyish imagination: one the great crystal fountain in the centre of the building—the sun was shining gloriously, charming all the jewels of the world into the plashing water—it seemed to me a dream of beauty. The other was Koh-i-Nur, in the cutting of which the great Duke of Wellington took so much interest; its fire has now been eclipsed by the mightier light of that wonder-stone, the Cullinane diamond, but the poetry of its story remains now, as it was then, one of the great

traditions of the gorgeous East, reaching back into legendary times, when there were still Afrits to do the bidding of King Solomon. No stone newly found in the blue earth of Africa can dim the magic halo of Eastern romance, or blur the succession of pictures which the crystal-gazer should see in the mystic depths of the Mountain of Light—all the glamour of "the thousand nights and one."

But it is idle to talk of this or of that exhibit, or even of many. There were things beautiful, and things hideous, for art at that moment had sunk very low; but the general effect of beauty and airy grace, together with the delicate framework and brilliancy of the whole structure, was indelible—unlike its more modern successors its size was not so great as to prevent one from gaining a general impression of the whole, and that was a joyous, sensuous revelling in a palace of light. Even those whom I remember scoffing at the idea when it was first mooted were compelled to admit that it was a great conception nobly carried out; it was a triumph of which the present Crystal Palace gives no conception. The transfer to Sydenham and the increase in size seemed at once to vulgarize it.

Great were the joys of the Exhibition! but there were greater yet in store for me in the first sight of the richly fabled Rhineland, where, after a few happy days in London, I was to join my father. Those were times when the "Pilgrims of the Rhine" wandered through a realm of romance and poetry untouched by the vulgar hand of utilitarianism. The air that we breathed was as pure, as nipping, and as eager as that which many centuries ago floated round the Dragon's rock and the eyrie from which the brave Roland looked down upon the island convent—the prison of all that he held dearest upon earth.

Now tall chimneys cut up the lovely views, belching out sulphurous vapours upon the castles and fastnesses of the old Robber Knights. Factories and huge industries darken the blue of the sky. The siren song of the Lorelei is no longer heard from the rock where she used to sit "combing her golden locks with a golden comb," and luring the benighted fisherman to his doom; she has fled, Heaven knows whither, scared by the prose of a cruel century; the clang of the Nibelungen's hammer and anvil has ceased to beat in the dark caverns of the earth. Giants and

dwarfs have disappeared, and the Rheingold is now won by methods in which there is neither beauty nor romance, nor fairy lore. What was the *Wacht am Rhein* about, that it did not strike a blow to hinder the defiling of the sacred river? It has been fierce enough against the Frenchman; could it do nothing to stay the hand of the sacrilegious German money-spinner?

Last year (May, 1914) I took a novice to view the scenes which had cast a spell over my young enthusiasm. He was disappointed, and I could not wonder at it. No crucible of the imagination can weld together Manchester and the Sieben Gebirge.

In 1851 life on the Rhine sped like a happy dream. My father made Coblenz our headquarters, and we made many delightful expeditions; among others, a trip by steamer up to Bingen and thence across the river into the lovely Schweitzer Thal, which, lying as it does just out of the beaten track, is so seldom seen.

It was no mere chance that made my father choose Coblenz for our temporary abode. Mrs. Bradshaw was living there with her son-in-law and daughter, and she had been a great friend of my father and mother. When I knew her, she was an old lady and quite blind, bearing her affliction with that gentle patience which is so usual with those who are thus punished. She still had the delicately cut features and charm of manner which had made her famous in her youth; for she was no less a person than Miss Maria Tree, the singer and actress who took all London by storm when on the 8th of May, 1823, she "created," as the phrase now goes, "Home, Sweet Home," in the opera of *Clari* by Sir Henry Bishop. The words were by John Howard Payne, an American author, paraphrased from lines by T. Haynes Bayly, the author of "I'd be a Butterfly," a song now probably forgotten, but in my childhood almost as popular as "Home, Sweet Home," itself —especially in seminaries such as that of the Misses Pinkerton on Chiswick Mall. It is said that the motive of the air was taken from a Sicilian melody: be that as it may, it has been so long naturalized that it lives as something purely English. It will always be associated with Patti, but Maria Tree, who first made it live, should not be forgotten.

The libretto of *Clari* was based upon the old, old tragedy.

It was the story of a beautiful girl, who after some months of luxurious misery in a city, comes back to seek peace in her village home. I have often heard my father and Mr. Henry Greville say what a dream of fascination she was when with her wide-brimmed straw hat, slung by a ribbon to her arm—looking like a dainty picture by Morland—she came forward and in her sweet voice—a voice which in speaking retained its charm to the end—sadly warbled the pathetic song. The town was conquered and there was not a dry eye in the house.

In circumstances so romantic that even at this distance of time it would be indiscreet to mention them, she won the heart of Mr. Bradshaw—the Jemmy Bradshaw of contemporary memoirs—one of the great dandies of the early days of the nineteenth century, a friend of the Prince Regent. It was a happy marriage, and there was one beautiful daughter, who became the wife of Captain Langley, an officer in the 2nd Life Guards. They were as hand some a couple as could be seen—and they were made very welcome in the society of Coblenz. The sympathy of the sword and great personal charm were a passport to the friendship of the very smart garrison.

I can see Mrs. Bradshaw coming into the room tapping her way with her stick. Gracious and kind she always was, and her poor dim eyes, that used to laugh so merrily, had not forgotten how to smile a welcome. Many happy hours I spent as a boy and afterwards as a young man in her house in the Schloss-Strasse.

During the fifties, the old Emperor William, his brother being still alive, was military governor or viceroy of Rhenan Prussia and Westphalia, and held his Court at Coblenz. Both he and his Princess, afterwards the Empress Augusta, were most graciously kind to foreigners. My father was a frequent guest at the Palace, and even I, though a mere boy, was more than once invited to the afternoon coffee parties. Naturally enough the Court was a centre for the best society of the town and neighbourhood—mostly military and official.

The Prince was a handsome, soldier-like figure, bluff and hearty, royal to his fingers' tips, most gracious and friendly in the reception of his guests. He was all his life the sworn foe of anarchism

and socialism, and at one time was so clearly marked as a probable object of attack, that in March, 1848, he was compelled by his brother and the government to leave Germany for a while. He remained in London only until June, when he returned to Berlin as a member of the National Assembly, and declared himself a conscientious supporter of the Constitutional Monarchy. He assumed his high office at Coblenz in 1849, shortly after the attempt upon his life by a ruffianly anarchist named Adam Schneider at Niederingelheim.

The certainty that he must succeed his brother in the kingship, as well as his own commanding character made his Court very regal and very important. He was admirably seconded by his Princess, a daughter of the House of Saxe-Weimar. The Empress Augusta, to give her the title by which she is best known, was in 1851 a graceful, still very attractive lady, in spite of her forty years. She was a woman of refined accomplishments, a scientific musician, a great lover of art. She was very well read, especially in French literature, and kept a French reader, M. Guillard, attached to her household. She preferred Victor Hugo, Balzac, Lamartine, Alexandre Dumas and the English writers to the dull dogmatics of the German schoolmen of that day. Bismarck complained not a little of her foreign predilections, and considered that she was far too much inclined to belittle what was German in favour of exotic literature.

The truth was that the two natures were not sympathetic: she was highly strung and æsthetic—in him not even Paris and St. Petersburg (now Petrograd) had been able to polish the roughness of the diamond. When the fateful episode at Ems occurred, the plain-spoken statesman did not conceal his fear lest the King should come under the influence of the Queen, who was hard by at her beloved Coblenz. At any rate, she made the Princely Court gay and very agreeable, and Bismarck was able to console himself with the reflection that his policy—I am now speaking of nineteen years before the great war—had a strenuous supporter in the Prince's right-hand man, Count Karl Von der Goltz.

Prince Frederick, the future hero of so many pitched battles, the father of the present Kaiser, was a tall, fair, handsome stripling,

beardless and very young looking, who a year or two later confided to my father that he was "almost engaged" to our Princess Royal. His sister, Princess Louise, still alive as Grand Duchess of Baden, was a lovely maiden, such as Perrault might have imagined, or Madame d'Aulnoy portrayed.

The ladies- and gentlemen-in-waiting were well qualified to turn what might have been a very dull Court into an intimate little coterie, enlivened by private theatricals in French, music, readings and other amusements; it was very dignified in that there was nothing frivolous about it, but it was never stiff and never dull.

The two ladies were Countess Haack—elderly, and if the truth must be told, rather plain—and Countess Oriolla, a beauty who preferred maiden meditation to matrimony, and would not be won.

Count Karl Von der Goltz was, owing to his confidential position with the Prince, a real influence in Germany—an influence recognized by Bismarck himself, and of him I should like to say a few words. In his "*Gedanken und Erinnerungen*" the great man describes him as "an elegant and smart officer of the Guards, a Prussian to the core (*Stock-Preusse*), and courtier, who took no more heed of the rest of Germany outside of Prussia than his position about the Court involved. He was a man of the world, rode well to hounds, handsome, a favourite with women, a past master in courtly etiquette; politics were not the first consideration with him, but were only a means to his ends at Court. Nobody knew better than he did that the recollection of Olmütz was the right incentive to win over the Prince and induce him to take a hand in the fight against Manteuffel, and he had plenty of opportunities both when travelling and at home of making the best use of this spur to the feelings of the Prince."

Count Von der Goltz's brother Robert was the first instigator of the Bethmann-Hollweg coalition against Manteuffel. He was a man of unusual talent and energy "with whose active capacity Manteuffel had the tactlessness to deal imprudently." (Bismarck *ut supra.*)

To Bismarck, Olmütz was the bitterest of thoughts. Two years after the Emperor Ferdinand had there abdicated in favour of his nephew, Francis Joseph, Prince Schwarzenberg, on behalf

of Austria, and Manteuffel, as plenipotentiary for Prussia, met there and came to the agreement known as the "*Olmützer Punktation*"—which at a moment when war seemed inevitable, settled the differences between the two Powers, but entirely in favour of Austria.

It was the life's aim and ambition of Bismarck to undo Manteuffel's work, and to assert Prussia as the leading Power among the Teuton peoples by uniting all the German States, to the exclusion of Austria, under her hegemony. In May, 1851, he was appointed secretary to the Prussian representative at the Diet, and three months later was promoted to be himself representative.

His first move against Austria was characteristic. It had been the custom at the social gatherings of the Diet for the Austrian delegate to give the signal for smoking. Bismarck took an early opportunity of lighting his own cigar first, politely offering a match to Count Thun, his Austrian colleague. It was the bursting of a bombshell, and the incident, apparently so trivial, was electric. Everyone present knew what was meant. That match lit a flame which was only extinguished fifteen years later at Sadowa.

The hatred of Manteuffel and his policy was the secret of Bismarck's admiration for the brothers Von der Goltz; for in the handsome courtier, Count Karl, he recognized an ally almost, if not quite, as powerful as the statesman and diplomatist Count Robert. It would be difficult to imagine two men more different than the polished guardsman and the rough, unkempt man-of-affairs, but they were both, to use Bismarck's own expression "*Stock-Preussen.*" Olmütz was to both a haunting memory, and, the wiping out of that stain a sacred duty which united the two.

By the side of Count Von der Goltz the two other gentlemen-in-waiting were less conspicuous figures. He was always in the foreground, and remained the faithful friend and servant of his old master all through the glorious campaigns of 1866 and 1870, in both of which he earned great honour as a cavalry general, and having resigned his high military commands in 1888. remained attached as General aide-de-camp to the Emperor William until the old warrior's death in the same year. He himself died thirteen years later at Nice, at the age of eighty-six.

His colleagues at the Court of Coblenz as I knew it were Major Schimmelmann, a handsome giant, who was very good to me, and another officer, Herr Von Steinäcker, a rather melancholy man who worshipped the ground upon which Countess Oriolla's pretty foot trod; it used to be said that he proposed to her once a month, and on being once a month refused, would take to his bed love-sick, disconsolate, emerging at the end of twenty-four hours to resume his duties. But his story belongs to the small-beer chronicles of the Court, whereas that of Count Von der Goltz, like that of the glorious Prince, King, Emperor, whom he loved and served, belongs to the old October ale of German politics and history, a heady brew if ever there was one.

We paid several visits to Coblenz during my Eton days—and in 1857, when I was already twenty years old, I went back there with a reading-party from Oxford. We stayed there for some five or six weeks and then went on to that wicked Paradise, Baden Baden. It was in the old days of the gaming tables—needless to say, we, like the other moths, had our wings singed, and when we had little more than enough to pay for third-class tickets, fled, and landed in Paris with just about a hundred francs between us. I managed to get three rooms in some obscure back street in the Quartier Latin for thirty francs the week—we breakfasted in a *crèmerie* for a few sous—dined at the two-francs dinner in the Palais Royal—lived the *vie de Bohème* with the students and *rapins*, who gave a warm welcome to Oxford, and when replenishment of our purses came from England, left our church-mouse poverty and wild cheery life with the greatest regret.

In the month of April, 1914, I was in Germany, with two days to spare. I had long been haunted by the wish once more to see Coblenz, the happy hunting-ground of sixty years ago. How could a veteran better wind up a holiday than by fulfilling that desire? We put up at the old hotel, "Zum Riesen"—the Giant—a *caravanserai* that I knew well as long ago as my first visit in 1851. Not that we ever lodged there, for my father preferred the "Bellevue," out of affection for old M. Hoche, the proprietor, who had been a famous cook in Paris.

Those were the days when the table d'hôte acted up to its name,

and the host in person sat at the head of the table as Lord of the Feast; every now and then, as some special dish was being handed round, M. Hoche would get up from his seat and come to my father, saying, "Mangez de ça, Monsieur, j'y ai mis la main"—and what a cunning hand it was! and how cheap was the excellent dinner served at one o'clock—fifteen groschen (1s. 6d.) if you came at haphazard, ten groschen if you were *abonné*—supper was *à la carte*. These were the prices of the best hotels on the Rhine, and they must have been just, for dear old M. Hoche and his wife waxed fat upon them, and having lived in great content, died leaving a fortune. The table d'hôte at which the good old grey, snuffy generals and colonels and *Herren Geheimräte* dined in state is a thing of the past. The old "Bellevue" has been pulled down and has been replaced by a gigantic new "Bellevue"—whose Pharaoh knew not Joseph—Coblenz has grown out of all recollection, and prices have followed suit.

Here and there I found some old parts of the town almost untouched, and the view from the bridge over the Moselle is a relic of the past, with its church spires and old-fashioned, rickety houses, roofed with brown tiles, weather-stained like the grey walls and shutters, as picturesque as age and just a modicum of dirt and shabbiness can make them. Here the character of the old German town reveals itself, and when we take our stand in front of the Giant Hotel and look out upon the Rhine, the bridge of boats opening to make way for some passing timber-raft—itself its own cargo from the depths of the far-away Black Forest—when we look at the grim Ehrenbreitstein with its batteries frowning threats from its rocky heights—then we forget all modern improvements and artistic misfortunes, and are once more in the old Rhineland.

On the evening of our arrival, after dark the riverside was gaily thronged with people drinking in the cool evening air after the heat of a day as hot as summer. The stream was brilliant with the reflection of electric lights, but across the water on the awe-striking fortress there was just one lamp to be seen peering out of the gloom of the black battlements like a watchful eye—a strange and weird effect, befitting the castle of an ogre—a silent BEWARE!

THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON'S FUNERAL

On the eighteenth of November, 1852, the great Duke of Wellington was buried. Of course many boys, myself among the number, had leave to go up to London to see the funeral procession. It had been a very rainy autumn and the Thames was swollen to an inordinate degree. Eton was flooded and we were taken up part of the High Street in punts. I believe that no such flood has been seen since, though the year 1894, when the boys were sent home on the seventeenth of November, fell not far short of it.

I witnessed the funeral from the first floor of the Bath Hotel, which stood at the corner of Arlington Street and Piccadilly, at the north-eastern corner of the modern Ritz Hotel. I have since seen many great ceremonies, many magnificent and moving spectacles in many lands, but none that could be named in the same day with the funeral of the Iron Duke. As a military display it was, of course, superb. All arms were represented, and a brave show they made; uniforms were far more gorgeous in those days than they are now that the spirit of economy has cut off epaulettes and gold lace from officers, shabracks and other ornaments from their horses. The bands of the various regiments, the muffled roll of the kettle-drums, mysterious in the distance, heralding the dirge of the "Dead March in Saul," followed by the wailing of the bagpipes of the Highland regiments; the solemnity of the reversed arms, the charger with empty boots—always a pathetic sight at a soldier's funeral—led behind the great bronze car, hung with wreaths of cypress and bay, drawn by twelve black horses, three abreast, housed with black velvet and a blaze of heraldry; the deputations of splendidly clad foreign officers, following the car. All this appealed to the imagination of the huge crowd, often moving them to tears, for they knew full well that "a Prince and a great man was dead in Israel." Few there were, even among the poorest, who had not managed to don some slight sign of mourning, the slighter the more touching, for it meant the more: a scrap of crape, a bit of black cloth worn as an armlet were but the tokens of the real mourning which was in men's hearts. He was such a

familiar sight to Londoners, this wonderful old hero whom they used to watch riding along Constitution Hill to and from the Horse Guards—to and from duty—to the last a spare, lithe, active figure, mart as a young boy, dressed with scrupulous neatness, and even a tinge of dandyism, in a tight-fitting, single-breasted blue frock coat, with spotless white trousers. When he passed all men doffed their hats as if he had been a king, and the answering salute of the forefinger raised to the brim of his hat, never omitted, never varying, became almost historic. Often I saw him: he was a very old man, and the neck was a little bent, but the chiselled face was still commanding, and the fire had not ceased to glow in those eagle eyes, the *finestra dell' anima*—altogether an unforgettable figure.

London loved him. Much water, as the saying goes, had flowed under the bridges since April, 1831, when the mob broke the windows of Apsley House, while the body of the Duchess, just dead, was lying there waiting burial. The iron shutters were the only signs left of the fleeting unpopularity of the Reform days. The life that was in the Duke, his activity, his unwearying interest and the share which he took in affairs and events great and small, from the quelling of the Chartist insurrection, only five years before his death, to the opening of the Crystal Palace in Hyde Park in 1851 and the cutting of the Koh-i-Nur, stirred the imagination and roused the admiration of all men, rich and poor. People used to tell how, when he and Lord John Russell were discussing the steps to be taken for the safety of London in 1848, and Lord John suggested one measure after another, the invariable answer from the grim old soldier was, "Done already." Nothing had escaped that wonderful eye. And so he became, as it were, a superman, and when he died men looked around them and there was none found to fill the gap.

As the great funeral car passed opposite the window where I was, one of the wreaths of cypress and bay leaves fell off. So soon as the last soldier closing the procession had disappeared, a poor old woman dashed forward and picked up the wreath. I ran down and tried to buy it of her, but she would not part with her precious relic. At last I persuaded her to sell me one cypress cone for a shilling. The cone was full of seed which I sent down to Exbury

in Hampshire, at that time belonging to my father; and there are now, in the wood near the house, a number of quite important cypress trees, the beautiful sixty-year-old children of that wreath.

After the funeral, "The death of the Duke of Wellington" was set as the subject for a copy of Alcaics for fifth-form boys at Eton. It was an unfortunate subject, for it was sure to lead to some regrettable absurdity: that did not fail: one boy began his copy of verses with the two lines:

> Ut dixit olim magnus Horatius,
> Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori.

Apart from the bathos of the drivel, it was so inappropriate, seeing that the glorious old warrior fell asleep at Walmer full of years (eighty-three) and honour, on the fourteenth of September, 1852. His body was brought to London, and lay in state at Chelsea for a week before the funeral.

CHAPTER V

WALES AND OXFORD

I LEFT Eton at Christmas, 1854, after nearly nine years' experience of its good and its evil. The last half spent there was not a happy one, though I was high up (second, in fact) in sixth form, in the boats, a member of Pop, captain of my house, and invested therefore with dignities such as I could never hope to possess again. I had been for two years in Dr. Goodford's division, and during all that time I cannot call to mind ever having received from him a friendly word, a kindly look or a smile: and when I left and deposited his fee* with him, he said, "Well! I hope you may do better elsewhere than you have done here. But I doubt it." Not very gracious or encouraging words with which to send a boy forth into the battle of life. And yet I cannot have been altogether so bad as he thought, for my leave-taking with my tutor, and with other masters who knew me better than Goodford did, was very different.

But apart from such personal matters, the memory of that last half is a sad one. We were at the beginning of the Crimean War, and never shall I forget the black gloom of the day when the list of killed and wounded at the battle of the Alma was posted up at Pote Williams' bookshop. We older boys came out of the shop blinded with tears ill repressed for poor young fellows who had been in the same division with us a few months before, and others a year or two our seniors, who had been the demi-gods of

* "Leaving money" has now been done away with. In my day a sixth form boy on taking leave of the Head Master, laid on his desk an envelope containing £15. For other boys the fee was £10. It was an ignoble custom, rightly abolished.

our fourth-form days. Then came Inkerman—and how the blood raced boiling through our veins when we read the soul-stirring story of Balaclava—outdoing Thermopylæ. Just heaven! Why were we not there? Think of us boys, almost men, reading of the gallant deeds of Bob Lindsay, Gerald Goodlake, George Wombwell, and many others, men almost boys! Then came the trenches, but of those hours the worst was yet to come.

From Eton I went to Batsford, which I saw for the first time, little thinking of the future which it held for me; and there I spent four happy weeks, being introduced to shooting and hunting, the latter under the tutelage of old Jem Hills, the famous huntsman of the Heythrop, of which Lord Redesdale, though no longer master, was still the uncrowned king.

At the end of the holidays I was to go to Mr. W. E. Jelf, near Barmouth, to be coached for a few months before going to Oxford. At that time the railway went no further than Shrewsbury, where I lodged at the sign of the "Raven," an old-fashioned country inn of great repute—such an inn as Charles Dickens would have loved, and as he alone could have described. As I sat at dinner I saw that there was one other guest in the coffee-room. While the waiter was out of the room this gentleman came up to me and said, "Sir, I beg your pardon for interrupting you, but you can render me a great service." I thought of Buckstone in "Lend me Five Shillings," and instinctively froze, but I thawed again when he went on to say, "I am Professor Anderson, the Wizard of the North; I am going to give an exhibition of conjuring to-night, and for two of my most telling tricks I need an accomplice. Will you help me? I need hardly say that you will have a free admission."

I suppose that he thought that I was a "youth of an ingenuous countenance and ingenuous modesty," and should not arouse suspicion. I consented, and he entrusted me with a marked coin and some other trifle, giving me full instructions as to what I was to do. We adjourned after dinner; the room was crowded and the Professor made a great success of his show. And so it came about that my first appearance in public was as "bonnet" to the Wizard of the North. I saw no more of my friend, for the next day I was coaching in Pickwickian fashion on the box seat through

Wales to Dolgelly, where my tutor's carriage met me and finally landed me at his pretty place, Caerdeon, where he had bought himself a small estate and built a charming house.

The Rev. William Edward Jelf was a man of no little renown in the Oxford world. He had been senior Censor of Christ Church, a great disciplinarian both in college as tutor, and outside as proctor. He was a very sound scholar, and the translator of Raphael Kühner's Greek Grammar, a monumental work. One of his greatest friends was Scott, the master of Balliol, to whom he was wont to assign quite the lion's share of the credit for the great dictionary—Liddell and Scott. As a Don, Jelf was anything but popular—he was too uncompromising, too " stiff in opinions." At the same time he was justice itself, and if you obeyed the law—his law—to the right or to the left of which there was no salvation, there was no limit to what he would do for you. I had been warned of his " stiffness," and made up my mind to observe discipline, with the result that we got on famously, and the months spent with him were, if rather lonely, on the whole happy and very profitable, for he certainly was a most inspiring teacher.

All my work was done in my own room ; with Mr. Jelf I had but one hour a day, but then it was such an hour ! Sixty minutes not one of which was without its value. During the months that I spent with him, from the end of January to October, I read through the whole of Herodotus, the Iliad and the Odyssey, the Agamemnon of Æschylus, and, above all, as an exercise, the Medea of Euripides, looking out every reference in my master's great grammar. In Latin I read Pliny's delightful letters, was supposed to be sufficiently well up in Horace and Virgil, and was spared the arch-bore Cicero, in regard to whom I by no means shared the enthusiasm of Mrs. Blimber ; as a matter of archæology I might sympathize with her as to the Tusculan villa, but its owner and his self-glorification I should have avoided.

The curriculum was chosen as the best preparation for trying to gain the Slade Exhibition at Christ Church. When I had been a few days with Jelf and he had taken my measure, he made up his mind that he would make me carry that off, and of course no one knew better than he did what would be the most profitable training.

I should like, if it be not deemed an impertinence, to say one word here upon the much-vexed question of a classical education, and of Greek in particular. It is very easy, very cheap, to say that Greek and Latin are of no use in learning modern languages. I have had some experience in the study of both, and I am distinctly of opinion that nothing has helped me so much in the acquisition of even the most out-of-the-way modern languages as the work which I did under Jelf, dissecting every sentence and every particle in the Medea with the help of his Greek grammar.

No language has been so thoroughly analysed—perhaps because none has been so philosophically constructed—as Greek. The man who starts upon the study of modern languages, after having dissected, conscientiously and searchingly, the work of one of the Greek giants with the help of Jelf's great book, has insensibly converted his mind into a sort of comparative grammar, he has acquired the knowledge of points of difference and points of similarity, that is to say of comparison, of which Buffon said, " nous ne pouvons acquérir de connaissance que par la voie de la comparaison," and although the aid given to him is, of course, indirect, it is none the less real. He is in the position of a man who goes to a new gymnastic exercise with trained muscles, and therefore with marvellous ease, as compared with the man whose muscles and sinews are flabby and slack. That it is a discipline of the highest significance few will be found to deny. When Darwin spent seven years in dissecting barnacles it was not simply a knowledge of barnacle nature at which he was aiming ; he was training his mind for other purposes. Apart from the beauties which they reveal to us, and so without any reference to the important question of culture, I am in favour of the study of the classics, as a gymnastic exercise of the brain, as a dissection of barnacles which yields far higher results than could be gained by merely learning French and German without any other preparation. In that way a man would attain what must simply be a more or less glorified couriers' knowledge, practical no doubt, up to a certain degree, but unscientific and failing him at crucial points.

The best Oriental scholars whom I have known have all been men who attacked their Eastern studies armed with the weapons

furnished by a classical education. In China Sir Harry Parkes was an admirable oral interpreter. But he, himself, as I have said elsewhere, always regretted his want of classical training—nor would it be possible to compare him with that great scholar Sir Thomas Wade. In Japan Von Siebold was as fluent a talker as could be found. He was the son of the famous physician and naturalist, who was attached to the Dutch Mission at Deshima, and had learnt Japanese "ambulando." But it would be childish to name him with such learned men as Satow, Aston and Chamberlain, men who brought the training and literature of the West to their studies in the East. It is not without significance to note the great respect which such men were able to command, whereas the mere parrot, however clever, was held in little more esteem than a head waiter. Think of Basil Chamberlain appointed to the Chair of ancient Japanese literature in the University of Tokio.

And our own beautiful English, the language of Chaucer, Shakespeare, Milton: will that not suffer if a false utilitarianism should succeed in banishing the classics from our schools? Even now it is surrounded by enemies, but I shudder to think of what it might become after two centuries of nothing but trans-oceanic influences unchecked by scholarship.

It was a bitterly cold winter, long spoken of as the Crimean winter, which was ushered in by January, 1855. In Wales as elsewhere it was so cold that many birds and beasts were frozen to death, and one day in my tutor's garden I caught a live woodcock in my hand. The poor creature was at the last gasp, dying of starvation. For many scores of miles round there was no moist cranny into which it could insert its long beak for food. The earth was like iron. Death and misery everywhere in these islands, and it was terrible to get the news from the Crimea, where hundreds of our poor, starving, shivering soldiers were in little better plight than the wild creatures at home. How they suffered! and how nobly patient they were!

During the dark months there was not much to be done beyond taking long, solitary walks in the midst of that glorious scenery; Diphwys behind us, the Barmouth river and Cader Idris in all its majesty in front of us. Barmouth itself a little tiny fishing village.

It would have been a dull time if Jelf had not clapped spurs into me and filled me with a new-born ambition, and a certain measure of that belief in myself without which there is no hope. And I did work! When the spring came it brought with it an invitation to Jelf to act as examiner in the final schools at Oxford. He was very anxious to accept this, for he loved keeping up the connection with his old university, so he proposed to me that I should finish up the last two or three weeks with him at Christ Church, where his brother, the principal of King's College, who was a Canon, had lent him his house. My father raised no objection, and I, of course, was delighted, for I knew that among the undergraduates I should find many old friends. I am grateful for the memory of those days, for never again in after years did Oxford exercise upon me the same fascination that it possessed at that time; I was very young, and very impressionable. Indeed in a way it seemed as if I then was under an influence which, when I came back some months later, had died away.

At my first visit there was still an old-world atmosphere about the place, something which had preserved a sort of elusive aroma of the cloister and the monk. It was the Oxford of the great men who from days immemorial had made it famous; in modern times of "that devout spirit," Pusey, Newman, and "the movement." It was instinct with the music of Keble. But to me at that particular moment it was the Oxford of Gaisford. The great Dean died a few weeks later, Liddell became Dean, and Oxford came under the gentle sceptre of a bevy of ladies, two of them very beautiful, very smart, and not a bit monachal. Moreover, it soon ceased to be a place of learning for English gentlemen of the reformed Christian faith. In 1855 the Parthian, the Mede, the Elamite, the dweller in Mesopotamia, had no place in the sacred cloisters. We were all called upon to subscribe to the Thirty-nine Articles ("forty, if you wish it, sir," was the pert answer of a famous wit), and as for the various fellowships and scholarships, they remained as they had been instituted by the pious founders. All Souls was a link between the university and the great world. The qualifications for a fellowship there were that the candidate should be "bene natus, bene vestitus et modice doctus *in arte canendi.*" It was

irreverently said that those last three words had long since been omitted. The legend ran that before the election the candidates, duly qualified as founder's kin, were invited to dine in Hall: a cherry tart was served, and the supreme test upon which election depended was the way in which the aspirant disposed of the stones.

In those happy days a fellowship of All Souls possessed the same quality which Lord Melbourne admired so much in the Order of the Garter, "There was no damned nonsense of merit about it." Now, alas! all is changed. The fellows of colleges, even of All Souls, are married and meritorious. The Don's wife is the ruling power and his daughters are the nymphs of Isis, floating luxuriously in punts under the willows of the backwaters—punts that the ruthless proctors of my day, suspiciously tolerant of sisters, would have employed mine-sweepers to disperse. Oxford has suffered a sea-change. All the tongues of the diaspora of Babel raise a cacophony in the groves of the Academeia. The Mohammedan in pious prayer turns his face to the Kibleh and curses the infidel. The Buddhist reverently seeks Nirvana in the contemplation of his own navel. The mild Hindoo profitably studies anarchy. The Negro becomes a Christian and takes holy orders that he may go back to his own country, receive a revelation, and organize a massacre of whites by Divine command. Such are the uses to which the grand old universities of England and America are now put, and this is what is called reform. The Oxford of Gaisford, the Cambridge of Whewell are phantoms of the past; what were once the strong places of Christianity are now held by the heathen, and England is no longer for the English—no—not even the House of Commons.

Dean Gaisford was a great potentate: not only was his scholarship superb, but he was also a ruler of men. When he nodded, Olympus trembled. When he stood up at the altar in Christ Church and thundered out the first Commandment, with a long pause after the "I" and a strong insistence on the "Me," he would look round the cathedral sternly, as much as to say, "I should like to see the undergraduate, or the graduate either, for that matter, who will dare to dispute that proposition." His famous utterance in a sermon, "St. Paul says, and I partly agree with him," has

become a classic. But he was like the Nasmyth Hammer : he could crush a rock or flatten out a rose-leaf. Jelf had a good story of the way in which he once petrified a very young Don who at one of his dinners ate an apple in a way which he did not consider to be quite orthodox.

Not unnaturally I felt no little trepidation when on presenting myself for the *vivâ voce* examination for the Slade Exhibition, I saw the dreaded Dean in the Chair. To my relief the Iliad was the book chosen, and I was put on to construe. Then came a few questions on Homeric matters, in which Jelf, during long months, had primed me well ; and as I left the room, great was my joy to hear the terrible Dean growl out, " That young man knows his Homer well." Never shall I forget the welcome which Jelf gave me when it was announced that I had won. Perhaps not a little both of his pleasure and mine consisted in thinking how annoyed Goodford would be, for Jelf always held that Goodford had been unfair to me. It was something of a *schaden-freude.*

So I was matriculated by Dean Gaisford, went to Switzerland with my father for a month, and then back to Caerdeon for a final polish at the hands of Mr. Jelf before Oxford.

When I entered Christ Church in the following October (1855) there were at any rate three memorable personages amongst the Dons. Dr. Pusey was a venerable figure—venerable not on account of his age, for he was but fifty-five, and had nearly thirty more years ahead of him, but as the hero of many fights, the victim of fierce persecutions, the man who, had he lived two or three centuries earlier, would have been burnt alive ; some of his opponents must have regretted the disabilities imposed by the nineteenth century, but he himself would have faced the stake with all the courage of an inspired martyr. As he shuffled along the great quadrangle, by no means a stately figure, looking older, far older, than his years, there would be few men, whatever their opinions might be as to the religious controversy of which he was the figurehead, who would not take off their caps out of respect for his goodness, his piety, his heroism and his great learning. He was not only profoundly versed in all the subtleties of the old Fathers, but at Göttingen, whither the necessities of theological study had driven him, he plunged with

heart and soul into the dark depths of German priestcraft and anti-priestcraft, and into the mysteries of Syriac, Hebrew and Arabic scholarship.

To me there was always a magic halo about the learning of the East, and so, although I never had speech of the great Divine, never even had the very real honour of being introduced to him, I looked upon him with no little awe as one removed far above the level of ordinary men. The other canons and professors were no doubt worthy men and learned—perhaps even an honour to their cloth; but the famous professor of Hebrew was Somebody. I felt, as Napoleon said of Goethe, "there is a Man."

The senior Censor of Christ Church was Osborne Gordon, a brilliant character whom to have known was indeed a privilege, and as I had the good fortune to be his pupil and he was very kind to me, he has remained one of the pleasantest memories of my university days. He was a finished scholar, very witty, with a great appreciation of character. He would say the drollest things with the most imperturbable gravity, being in his way a man of the world, in spite of the cramping tendencies of the Oxford common room. When Lord Lisburne took his son, my contemporary, to Christ Church, he consulted Mr. Gordon as to what allowance he should give him as a Tuft. "Well, Lord Lisburne," answered the witty Don, cocking his trencher cap on one side as was his wont when he was going to say something very funny, "you can give your son any allowance you like, but please remember that his debts will always be in proportion to his allowance"—a most sagacious remark! On another occasion, a certain young gentleman went to him and asked him whether he had any chance of passing his little-go. "Well! you have one great advantage," was the answer. "You will go into the examination absolutely unhampered by facts."

During the time that I was at Oxford, Charles Spurgeon was making a new sensation as a preacher. One Sunday Osborne Gordon and two or three Oxford Dons went up to London to hear him. The next evening my tutor came, as he often did, to smoke a pipe in my rooms. I asked him what had been the impression made by Spurgeon on him and his friends. They had been struck by Spurgeon's power, but had been greatly shocked when the

preacher, after laying down a rule of life, went on to say: "If you do as I have told you to do, and if after that Jesus Christ should at your death refuse you admittance to heaven, you tell Him that Charles Spurgeon says He is a very shabby fellow!" Surely, contempt of all convention and the familiar degradation of the most sacred Name could hardly go further. Throw propriety to the winds, and it is an easy matter to make a startling speech or preach an arresting sermon. To Gordon's cultivated and fastidious mind such levity and vulgarizing of the sublime could only be repellent.

Osborne Gordon was afterwards, in 1860, appointed Vicar of East Hampstead, where he was as much beloved by Lord and Lady Downshire and his other parishioners as he had been at Oxford. Who that really knew him could help loving him? He died in 1883. Ruskin wrote his epitaph—rather a stilted Johnsonian attempt.

The third great treasure, unsuspected by us, that we possessed at Christ Church, was our mathematical lecturer, Charles Lutwidge Dodgson. Who could have guessed that the dry little man from whom we learnt the sublime truth that things which are equal to one another are equal to themselves, was hatching in that fertile brain of his such a miracle of fancy and fun as "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland"? The book came out whilst I was in the Far East, out of the way of all literary gossip, and I was stricken with amazement when I came home and the identity of Lewis Carrol was revealed to me.

A good story was told about him which I have not seen in print. Queen Victoria, it seems, was so much struck by "Alice" that she commanded Sir Henry Ponsonby to write and compliment the author, adding that she would be pleased to receive any other book of his. He was greatly flattered and sent her his "Syllabus of Plane Algebraical Geometry."

All the tutors were good and amiable men. But there was one in memory of whom I would fain burn my candle, though it be but a tallow-dip, and that was St. John Tyrwhitt, a most dear and charming man, a person of great culture, an artist in his leisure hours, the friend and disciple of Ruskin. He would often invite me to his rooms and talk with fervent admiration of his

illustrious friend, infecting me with the first germs of enthusiasm for his works. Always kind, always sympathetic, ready at all times to give good advice, a trusty friend in need, without a half-penny's worth of donnishness about him, St. John Tyrwhitt, whatever his scholarship may have been, as to which I know nothing, was a valuable asset in a flock of young men. Dean Liddell, who succeeded Dean Gaisford, was a singularly handsome man, and a great figurehead. But he was not popular. The undergraduates resented his treatment of them as schoolboys; he could not quite shake off the schoolmaster attitude of his Westminster days, and this led to some deplorable follies, and worse than follies. Rebellion was rife, the lecture room was gutted, and the furniture destroyed; a kettle of gunpowder with a fuse attached to it was hung upon the door of the deanery, but was fortunately discovered in time. A subscription was got up to pay for the damage that had been done, and the malefactors were rusticated. For the first year the condition of things was deplorable—after that they mended. But the Dean, in spite of his wife's judicious help, never in my time commanded the sympathy of "the House."

The drawing together of the threads of memories much more than half a century old is but dismal work. It is like walking through a cemetery filled with tombstones all inscribed with names that in spite of time are still familiar, and some of them very dear. This has probably been said before—it is so evident. Of the Dons of 1855 not one remains. Baynes, who died a few years ago, was the last. Even of my own contemporaries few, only here and there one, are left. The bright curly heads, fair or dark, with whose owners we lived, and laughed, and hoped and quarrelled, have all been laid low, and if one remains above ground, it is as bald as a billiard ball, or perhaps nourishes a few straggling lifeless hairs, white as old age can bleach them. Few became eminent: among them were Lord St. Aldwyn (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), *facile princeps*—Alfred Thesiger, raised to be a Lord Justice of Appeal, but who did not live long to enjoy his fame—Roland Williams, also Lord Justice, himself the son of a judge (if I only knew how to apply "matre pulchrâ filia pulchrior" to a legal reputation!) one of the most delightful room-neighbours—

were men who made their mark in the world—outside of Christ Church were Swinburne, and, a little older, Lord Justice Bowen, prince of lawyers and wits—Tom Brassey at University, and above all, John Morley at Exeter. The latter I did not know until a dozen or so years later, when he was already a power in Letters, a man for whom, differing with him as I always have done *toto cælo* in politics, I entertain the greatest respect mingled with an affectionate gratitude for giving me my first encouragement as a writer in 1871.

The rest of us were just mediocrities: tolerable specimens of healthy young Englishmen ready to do our duty as landowners, soldiers, lawyers, clergymen, civil servants; in general, fairly respectable, in some cases woeful scamps. On one point we were most of us agreed, at any rate in practice, and that was that it was expedient that we should go through the University doing as little work and spending as much money as possible. That was the way in which we interpreted our duty to our parents. And so I spent the first two years of my life at Oxford in forgetting with the utmost facility the small modicum of scholarship that with the utmost difficulty I had acquired under Jelf. A piteous and a shameful record.

We had the usual number of Tufts—some of whom achieved notoriety in after life: Lord Coventry early made a name for himself as a great agriculturist and model landlord, a mighty hunter before the Lord, M.F.H. and Master of the Buckhounds, a most conscientious and hardworking Lord Lieutenant of his county, and I suppose one of the best living judges of horses and racing; a man who has always been idolized by his friends. Then there was Skelmersdale, a really resplendent youth in all the first glory of a beard which was to become the joy of Courts and the title to an Earldom. He was as handsome as he was good and generous, the highest type of honest Anglo-Saxon beauty, after whom the Donnesses ran, worshipping, "en tout bien tout honneur," as if he had been in deed, and not in appearance only, the archangel Gabriel.

Of the undergraduates at Christ Church who were a little older than me, none was more brilliant, socially, than John Arkwright

25509

of Hampton Court, near Hereford; he was so gay, so full of fun, and so "good all round," that he was always the central figure wherever he might be. The other day I was reading over again the copy of verses which he wrote as a "Vale" when he left Eton; the satire, always good-natured, of the different masters of that day was really a masterpiece of wit. Of course, all the delicate humour of it would be unintelligible to the present generation—its value depended on knowing the now long-forgotten shades that then were men—but as the work of a boy of seventeen or eighteen it was wonderful.

One fifth of November, when there was a town and gown row, about forty of us went out from Christ Church to see the fun. Hardly had we all got into St. Aldate's Street when we met the senior Proctor, with Brown the marshal carrying the mace, the bull dogs and all the myrmidons of collegiate authority. Of course, he stopped us—"Your name and College, gentlemen!" We were promptly sent back into Tom Gate, and as promptly marched across the quadrangle and were out again at Canterbury Gate, Arkwright and myself still leading. This time we got as far as the High Street unmolested, but no sooner had we turned the corner by Spiers' shop than we ran into the arms of another Proctor. "Your names, gentlemen; go back to College at once!" and forming up behind us with his lictors, the great guardian of morals drove us in front of him along the High Street and by St. Aldate's to Tom Gate. We had not gone many yards when we met Proctor No. 1, who mercifully did not recognize us. "Your names and Colleges, gentlemen." "Thank you, sir," said John Arkwright with inimitable coolness, pointing to the police force behind, "We have our Escort!" There was a great laugh from the crowd that had collected, and I expected consequences, but the Proctor must have been a good-natured fellow who saw the joke of the thing, for he took off his cap and disappeared, and we heard no more of the matter—but all chance of fun or a fight was over for that night, and this time we stayed within gates. John Arkwright, among other accomplishments, was a capital boxer—and we used to have great bouts at Maclaren's gymnasium and fencing-rooms.

Indeed there was quite a little fashion-wave of sparring which came over Oxford about the years 1856 and 1857, and so we got Aaron Jones to come down and give us lessons. He arrived the week after his second fight with Tom Sayers, and at that time, though by no means an ill-looking man, he was not a pretty sight. All shape, all humanity seemed to have been beaten out of his face; he must have suffered horribly, but that he did not mind. His courage was extraordinary and he was an undeniably fine boxer; but he had one great defect which was fatal to a first-class fighter in those days; his hands used to swell and get puffy, and the striking value of his blows was largely discounted. Now that gloves are used in all fights he would have been a most formidable adversary, for his power of inflicting punishment would have been as great as his endurance in taking it. He was a good specimen of his class, and he had a certain rough and ready wit which made him very amusing.

One day several of us had been sparring in my rooms, and we left off just when it was too late to go for a walk and a little too early to get ready for dinner; so we walked across to Tom Gate and stood there smoking and watching the passers-by. As we were talking, there came along a very pretty girl, very smartly dressed, under full sail (and it was full sail in those crinoline days, of which John Leech was the recorder). Somebody said, "Oh! look—what a pretty girl!" "Ah!" said Aaron, "I don't think much of her. Why just look at her feet! She'd frighten a worm in a half-acre field into fits if he saw her coming in at the further end of it."

Talking of boxing, it appears to me that the difference between the fighting of the days of which I am writing and the fighting of to-day is more than a question of gloves or no gloves. The gloves may save a certain amount of disfigurement which was caused by the cutting of knuckles; but as a guarantee against risk to life they are useless. On the other hand, the theory of the modern school of boxing points to far more real danger than was run by the prize-fighters of my day, such men as Ben Caunt, Bendigo, Nat Langham, Tom Sayers, Bob Travers and a host of other famous pugilists.

They continued the traditions of Tom Spring, Cribb, Jackson, Molyneux, the men of the Georgian days. Hitting was straight from the shoulder; "hooks" were practically unknown, and the sickening body blows rare indeed; the face was the target, and the infliction of black eyes and a bloody nose represented the punishment which it was sought to inflict; in the great fight between Tom Sayers and Heenan, of which I shall hope to write later on, I cannot call to mind the delivery of a single body blow, certainly there was not one that had any significance; in teaching, the first-rate masters of the art, Nat Langham, Hoiles (the Spider), young Reed, used to make their pupils defend the body by the position in which the right arm was carried, but the attack was always directed at the head—mainly at the eyes.

In the old straight fights, therefore, there was unquestionably much ugly mauling, but probably less danger than exists in these days of gloves, and hooks on the jaw, and deadly punches over the heart and vital organs.

In the Christmas and Easter vacations, the haunts of "the Fancy," as they were called (a name more fitting to beautiful ladies than to prize-fighters), in the neighbourhood of St. Martin's Lane, were very attractive to a young undergraduate who felt himself big and proud when he was greeted by and had shaken hands with such celebrities as I have mentioned above. There, too, he would meet many of the well-known patrons of the ring—Napier Sturt, Billy and Folly Duff and others. Billy was a great character of whom many a queer story was told. Rat-killing, badger-drawing and other kindred sports brought him into contact with all the dog-dealers or dog-stealers, for I fancy that in London the two trades were often interchanged in those days; perhaps they are still.

A lady whom he knew lost a pet dog and was miserable, so she wrote and complained piteously to Billy Duff, who said he would try and get it back for her. Off he went to the house of a famous dog-dealer, and was told that he was not at home. Billy asked to see the wife—oh! yes, the wife was at home, but she had had a baby a few days since and was in bed. Billy said that did not signify; he would just go upstairs and see her for a

moment as he had something important to tell her. So up he went and found Mrs. L—, who on hearing the case, swore by all her gods that her husband knew nothing about it. Something in the good woman's too positive manner aroused Billy's suspicion, so he took the baby out of its cradle and told her that he was going to carry it off and (he stammered badly), "as soon as his friend got her d-d-d-dog back he would return the b-b-b-aby." Downstairs he went with the baby, and in two hours the bereaved lady was shedding tears of joy over her dog.

An escapade of Billy Duff's at Baden might have ended in a tragedy. It was in the old days of the gaming tables when the most heterogeneous polyglot crowd, not altogether composed of angels, used to be gathered together in that earthly paradise. Dining at the table d'hôte, Billy found himself sitting next to a portentous personage wearing upon his thumb a huge red Cornelian ring graven with a coronet and a coat of arms of many quarterings. It was summer, and there were green peas, which the personage proceeded to shovel into his mouth with his knife. This offended Billy, who, with sublime impertinence, desired him not to repeat the offence. The Baron or Count, or whatever he was, stared furiously and went on pea-shovelling as before. "I have spoken to you once," stammered Billy. "D-d-d-don't let me have to speak again." This, of course, only made the heraldic personage more angry. So Billy watched his opportunity and nudged his neighbour's elbow, nearly driving the knife through his cheek. Of course there was a hideous row and a duel the next day, when Billy broke his adversary's arm. "I did not want to hurt the poor d-d-d-devil much," said Billy when he told the story. Long years afterwards I was talking to the head of his clan about him. To my amazement he had never even heard of him. Such is fame!

It would have been better for me if I had devoted a little less attention to the Fancy and their Corinthian friends, the Toms and Jerrys of the fifties, and had shown a little more respect for the purposes of the University. There was a moment when Moderations, then a modern innovation, came in sight, and I had to cram into something like six weeks work which would have been mastered

easily enough with a very small amount of work spread over two years. Osborne Gordon was kindness itself—he took me in hand and made me read Pindar with him, thinking that if he could but cram that into me, it would cover a multitude of sins.

The fatal day arrived. I did well enough until I came to Demosthenes; I had only read six orations out of eight, and as ill-luck would have it, two out of the three pieces set happened to be taken out of the unread speeches. Then came the *vivâ voce* —I was taken on in Pindar, and Osborne Gordon, who had come to listen, was delighted when at the end the examiners stood up and took off their caps, usually a sign that the victim who has been upon the rack has got a first-class. My dear tutor met me outside and said all sorts of pretty things. But when the lists came out there was I, a dismal second-class, beaten by two or three rivals whom I had floored over and over again in other examinations. When Osborne Gordon, furious, asked the reason why, the Examiners said that it was impossible to give a first to a young man who had evidently not read his books. Demosthenes had done me! How I cursed him and his pebble and the roaring sea-waves, and Æschines and the ἄνδρες δικασταί* and all the rabble of them!

Not long afterwards I received a nomination for the Foreign Office and was delighted to say farewell to the University. I was disgusted with Oxford, when I ought to have been disgusted with myself. But it was better that I should go. Amidst the old surroundings it would have been difficult, perhaps impossible for me to break with the old habits, the old loafing, and for an undergraduate there is nothing so dangerous, nothing so demoralizing as loafing. In that respect I believe that the University can claim a change for the better.

In my day, unless a youngster played cricket or rowed in the summer, unless he hunted or went out riding in the winter, there was little for him to do except dawdle about the High Street, or play billiards, or rackets, or tennis, and for these latter games there was but small provision. There was no hockey, and practically no football: I believe that there were a few young men who kicked

* ἄνδρες δικασταί = jurymen.

about a ball in remote pastures, but the game was looked upon as a degradation and the players as eccentricities. There were no "blues" except for the eleven, and the eight.

I quite sympathize with those who think that too much attention is now given to games; still, when I go to Oxford and see the hundreds of lads flocking out, half naked, to football, hockey, running and jumping, I cannot help admitting that they are leading cleaner, wholesomer lives than we did, when we sauntered between Carfax and Magdalen Bridge, parading the last unpaid masterpiece of some London tailor.

I am reminded of one of Gavarni's old caricatures. A poor, shabby student in the Quartier Latin is watching another trying on a very glorious new coat. "Combien ça te coûte-t-il un habit comme cela?" "Je ne sais pas." "Dieu veuille, mon cher, que tu ne le saches jamais!" Sooner or later the bill has to be paid, whether for loafing or for coats, and the bill for loafing is the heavier of the two.

CHAPTER VI

THE F. O.

Je suis copiste,
Affreux métier !
Joyeux ou triste,
Toujours copier !

NO one knew who was the unhappy clerk who, in a pessimistic mood, wrote those Dantesque lines with a diamond on a pane of glass in the old Foreign Office in Downing Street. If I had been in England when the old house was broken up, I should have tried to buy that window-pane, with its inscription—a note of despair recalling the "Lasciate ogni speranza, voi ch' intrate."

The old Foreign Office in Downing Street was a dingy building enough, with a sort of crusted, charwomanly look about it, suggestive of anything but Secretaries of State, ambassadors, and such-like sublimities. The *Dii majores* occupied tapestried* chambers facing the Park, but the great mass of the rooms in which the clerks worked looked out upon nothing but Downing Street on one side, and on the other a rookery so richly caked with soot and dirt that the very windows must long since have ceased to let in a ray of light—a nest of squalid slums that have long since been improved off the face of London. One house there was among those crazy old tenements occupied by some professional man in a small way of business, with two pretty daughters, maidens who from the security of their father's abode would make all sorts of loving demonstrations to the young scribes opposite. Meet them outside, and their eyes would be cast demurely upon the ground, chaste and virginal.

* Those tapestries are now one of the chief ornaments of the British Embassy at Paris.

Half an hour later they would be at their old tricks, casting the most appealing glances across the shabby street. They were like the veiled beauties of Constantinople, who, knowing themselves to be quite safe, will do all they can to allure the passing foreigner.

Poor Lionel Moore, one of our dragomans, who had lived in the Levant from childhood, used to tell such amusing stories about those elusive sirens. One day he was walking the streets of Pera when he saw a young Turkish lady riding upon a very smart mule, with an escort of three or four eunuchs, gloriously apparelled, evidently a lady of quality. As she passed Moore she partially put aside her yashmak and gave him a most bewitching glance—such a look as St. Anthony himself could not have resisted. He, always ready for an adventure, followed the temptress, though the sun was scorching. When she had made a fool of him long enough, the lady called up her chief eunuch and said, "You see that infidel?—go and fetch him a glass of water to cool him; he must be hot." As Moore spoke Turkish like a native the arrow hit the mark, and he slunk away, discomfited, down a side street.

Naturally it was with no little trepidation and a rather fluttering heart that on a bright morning in the month of February, 1858, I for the first time set foot inside the gloomy portals of the sacrosanct F. O. But my alarm was soon relieved, for in the hall were two gorgeous young clerks, sartorially superb, both acquaintances of mine, who gave me the kindliest of welcomes, and saved me from the ordeal of making myself known to good old Weller, the porter. The real moment of terror came when a few minutes later, having sent in my name, I was ushered into the room of Mr. Hammond, the Under-Secretary of State. But even in that Holy of Holies—the temple of the Norns that governed the destinies of nations—fear was dispelled by the great kindness of the High Priest.

Mr. Hammond was, I suppose, at that time a man of between fifty and sixty years of age—an imposing figure, big and burly, with rather a quick, jerky, incisive manner, which was apt to make men shy until they got to know him well, when the goodness and sweetness of his nature seldom failed to inspire affection. He was one of the best public servants that I ever came across. He was an indefatigable worker, and indeed his chief fault was that he took too

much upon his own shoulders; at the same time he was more than generous in meting out praise to others.

There are not many men left who served under him; the few that are yet alive must, like myself, have been pained by the way in which he has been alluded to in certain recent biographical works. Private letters, which were meant only for the eyes of those to whom they were addressed, and were certainly never intended to be published, should be carefully edited before they are put into print, otherwise words set down purely in jest, and inspired by the humour of the moment, wear a serious look which is all the more mischievous when the writer is a great personage. Again, Mr. Hammond has been blamed because of his famous declaration to Lord Granville as to the peaceful outlook in June, 1870. Was he to blame for this false view of the state of Europe? His opinion was based upon the despatches and—what is still more important—upon the private and confidential letters received from Her Majesty's Ambassadors at Paris and Berlin, and from those who in similar positions were watching the course of affairs in other capitals.

It was the various *chancelleries*, and not Lord Hammond, which were responsible for his statement; and the wrong forecast only shows that the blow fell suddenly and unsuspectedly, with the swiftness of a meteorite. Until the "editing" of the famous Ems telegram, to which I shall allude elsewhere, took place, Bismarck himself did not know how soon the gates of the temple of Janus were to be thrown open. The secret was well kept because it did not exist. War was the birth of a moment. There had been no hidden warlike preparations either in France or in Germany; indeed, so little was this the case that Bismarck tells us that it was not until he had consulted Moltke as to the relative states of the French and German armies, and which of the two would be likely to gain an advantage from an immediate declaration of war, that he lighted the torch. ("Gedanken und Erinnerungen," Vol. II., 99-113.) So much for the ungenerous blame which has been cast upon Mr. Hammond for his want of political foresight—an altogether unjust accusation, founded upon ignorance of the condition of affairs at the time.

Mr. Hammond was the Foreign Office; he kept all the strings

in his own hands. Probably such a method would be impossible in these days; but at the time of which I am writing his colossal industry and retentive memory enabled him to direct, single-handed, the whole current work of the department. He was indispensable. Of course those matters in which the policy of the Cabinet were at stake were dealt with then, as now, by the Secretary of State. But it is no small tribute to the value set upon Mr. Hammond's work by successive Foreign Ministers that no change of Government affected his position or lowered his authority.

Mr. Hammond kept me with him for a few minutes, warning me that my work at first would be very dull, and then he sent me off, saying, "Remember that there are no secrets here; everybody is trusted, and you will find that nothing is hidden from you. But you must hold your tongue." I cannot remember any violation of that rule until many years afterwards, when I had left the diplomatic service, and when a new system had been introduced—as I think, very unwisely; but I do remember once, when some twenty years later there had been a scandal in the *chancellerie* of an embassy of another country, that one of the greatest European financiers said to me: "Well, there is one thing of which England may be proud: the English Foreign Office is the only one at which we have never been able to buy information."

That says something for the old system of nomination, though I quite admit that there ought to be a stiffish examination of the nominees of the Secretary of State; but subject to that condition, I think that Lord Clarendon was quite right when he told a Committee of the House of Commons that he would rather resign the seals of the Foreign Office than surrender the right of nomination to a vacant clerkship.

I was told off for the Slave Trade or African department—the only one in which there was a vacancy, and there I remained for the first two years of my service. The presiding genius was one Dolly Oom, a great character. I do not suppose that he was more than fifty years of age, but he looked as old as a grasshopper. He was a great authority on dinners, and used to give very choice little parties in a tiny house in Duchess Street. In matters theatrical, especially in all that related to pantomimes, he was an expert, and he was a

faithful member of the Old Stagers at Canterbury—not as an actor, but as the official apologist, and all sorts of excuses used to be invented for bringing him on to the stage in that capacity, when, he being a favourite of many years' standing, his appearance, his faultless attire, his courtly bow, which it was whispered was a piece of royal heredity from Hanover, were received with thunderous applause. His bosom friend and the hero of his adoration was Charles Mathews the actor.

Work in any shape he detested; if we took him a despatch he would look at it with a sigh, and say, "Put it on the *monceau immonde*." What he dubbed the *monceau immonde* was a pile of papers "to be dealt with," carried backwards and forwards daily between the press and the middle table, which used to grow and grow until Wylde, the second in command, could stand it no longer, and would set to work to clear it all off, while Dolly Oom, sipping weak soda-water and brandy and uttering incapable sighs, would look on and shake his head with a look of outraged dyspepsia. There was one point upon which dear old Dolly Oom would stand no nonsense. All words ending in *ic* must have a final *k*—publick, eccentrick, etc. Soft and gentle as cotton-wool in all other matters, in this he was as hard and inexorable as the rock of Gibraltar! Upon that *k* depended the validity of treaties, the whole authority of the Secretary of State.

Wylde was a splendid worker and knew the African business well. If his minutes of between fifty and sixty years ago had been acted upon, much trouble and many tragedies would have been avoided. He was convinced of the part that South Africa must at some future time play on the world's chessboard. Unfortunately the value of his opinion was largely discounted by the fact that he had not the gift of writing; moreover, in those days none but European politics were thought worthy of the brains of statesmen.

Even American affairs, until the war broke out between North and South, aroused little interest, and as for Africa, there was only one man who took any heed of it, and his was a cry in the wilderness.

There was none to hear, and poor Wylde's minutes were buried without hope of resurrection in the *campo santo* of the Record Office.

It was rather a blow for young Oxford, full of the zeal deprecated by Talleyrand, and eager to distinguish itself in the most secret negotiations, to be set down to copy charter-parties and cargo-lists of the filthy ships that were engaged in the Slave Trade, and which sailed from New York bound for St. Thomas—nominally the St. Thomas of the West Indies, but in reality for that ill-omened island off the Guinea Coast where the " cargo of ebony " was to be picked up. If only the poor slaves could have been consulted, how they would have prayed against the measures that were taken for their protection! A slave was a chattel worth money, and would repay care and good food on the voyage. But with Her Majesty's cruisers always on the alert, the poor wretches were battened down under hatches in conditions so appalling that the accounts of their sufferings were absolutely sickening. Only the fittest and strongest could by any possibility survive. How many were thrown overboard for the benefit of the sharks no man could tell.

We were furnished by Mr. Archibald, our Consul at New York, with the most accurate information as to all the men and ships engaged in the traffic; we knew them all, and we kept a sort of album and register, which I started, from which we sent out slips to the Admiralty to be forwarded to the West Coast of Africa. We got at last to find the sort of interest in our work that the detectives of Scotland Yard have in theirs, and to feel a certain professional pride in every conviction. It was interesting years afterwards to hear from my old friend Billy Hewitt, when he was commanding the *Basilisk* in the China seas, of the prize money which those slips had been the means of putting into his pocket when he skippered a small vessel in the West African squadron.

There was always plenty of work, though our hours were very late. We did not begin until twelve, or even after that, but then we did not strike the balance as Charles Lamb did, by going away early. We were often copying for the mails till after seven o'clock, and in stress of political weather we had to wait till almost any hour. But the free mornings were a great boon—I always had time for a drawing lesson at South Kensington, or an hour's fencing and gymnastics at Harrison's in Panton Street, where there was a daily gathering of the same men—amongst them Lord Stanley, then

Colonial Minister, a very regular attendant. He would come in laden with a sheaf of blue books and despatches, speak to no one, and between his exercises bury himself in political work. He would leave as he came, silent and self-contained, carrying his papers under his arm. He was immensely strong, but clumsy; he could have felled an ox, but he would not have done it gracefully.

When the late Lord Redesdale was staying at Knowsley, shortly after Lord Derby had published his Iliad, he said to his host: "What does Stanley think of your Homer?" "He knows nothing about it," answered Lord Derby, laughing, "he's never read it. You see it isn't a Blue Book!" Probably no statesman of Lord Stanley's value has ever been so little understood; presumably it was his own choice, for certainly he did not wear his heart upon his sleeve, nor could anyone accuse him of affability, or of overmuch sympathy with his kind. Perhaps Lord Sanderson, who was not only his private secretary, but his intimate and trusted friend to boot, is the only man who could throw some light upon that strange character.

Lord Newton in his life of Lord Lyons has one or two ironically biting remarks about him: "This prosaic nobleman who is credited with having himself refused the throne of Greece." "It must have been a congenial task for a man of Lord Stanley's temperament to throw cold water upon the vague and slipshod proposals of the unlucky Emperor" (of the French); while "Lord Stanley's comment upon the Empress' frank and sensible conversation with Lord Lyons, upon the Roman question, urging that England should take a hand in it, was that it furnished the best reason he had received yet for keeping out of the affair altogether. The Emperor's reason for proposing a conference was that he disliked bearing the responsibility which he had assumed. Why should he be asked to bear it for him?"

Lord Stanley, afterwards Lord Derby, was certainly a remarkable man; his speeches were dull and prosaic, but they were full of wise common sense and they carried just weight. It always seemed to me that he showed in his public life those same qualities which he used to bring into Harrison's gymnasium—the strength of a bull and the determination of a gladiator, without

one spark of enthusiasm, without one care or thought beyond doing to the best of his great power what lay to his hand. A well-balanced, well-informed study of Lord Stanley would be a human document of great interest.

At the end of two years I was moved out of the Slave Trade into the French department, which, of course, was the most important and hardest-worked of the many divisions, for the Paris Embassy was looked upon as a sort of branch Foreign Office; there could be no diplomatic subject in which France was not interested equally with England, whether in agreement or in rivalry. So every despatch of any slightest importance—not to speak of many which had none—was marked to be copied for Paris. I used to wonder whether Lord Cowley, insatiable worker as he was, could find time to read all that we so painfully copied.

Such questions as those of the Danish duchies and the Danubian principalities (still alive under the title of "the Balkans") were the favourite pabulum of all the Ministers at the small German courts, worthy men whose capacity for spoiling paper was in exact proportion to the greatness of their unimportance. I remember at Stuttgart an industrious creature who had all the spinning powers of a hen-spider.

There were no typewriters in those days; it was all honest, strenuous copying from mid-day sometimes till night. Still much of the work was of absorbing interest, and the labour was lightened by delightful companionship. Staveley was the head of the department, a right good fellow, and a fine skater of the days when the members of the Skating Club used to disport themselves in the Regent's Park, or on the Serpentine, in tail coats and top hats; Croker Pennell, a great character, was second; Scott Gifford, a dear memory (great friend of Goldsmid and Jenny Lind, whom I heard sing at his house); Henry Eliot, the late Lord St. Germans, Bobsy Meade—both of them most justly popular. Later my old friend, W. A. Cockerell, happily still alive. It would have been difficult to find a more sympathetic crew.

Among the other colleagues we had John Bidwell, clever, agreeable, and much loved by all who knew him well; Johnnie Woodford, a handsome tenorino, an intimate friend, like myself,

of Mario and Grisi, and much behind the scenes of Covent Garden; Beauty Stephens 'a strange compound of wit and muddleheadedness, with a wonderful gift of hitting off a character in a couple of words; Anderson, rather solid and solemn, very popular on the steps of the Rag, to which it always seemed as if he ought to have belonged—indeed that wicked Stephens said of him that he "would have been a heavy dragoon, only there was no regiment heavy enough for him;" cranky little Cavendish, whose memoirs have been published, and to whom, when he came back to work after a short illness, and complained that he was not quite himself yet, John Bidwell said rather cruelly: "Well, Dish! don't you think that might perhaps be an improvement!" .

There were a score or more of others, now alas! gone, all of whom have left pleasant memories behind them. Of course, in so large a zoological collection there were some who did not belong to the Phœnix tribe; we had our apes and we had our bears; but in looking back upon those happy old days I claim the privilege of the sun-dial, and among the hours record only the serene.

Several of those who were in the Foreign Office at the same time with me reached great distinction. Lord Vivian became Ambassador at Rome, Philip Currie, so long private secretary to the great Lord Salisbury, and one of the staunchest of my friends, was raised to the peerage, having been Ambassador successively at Constantinople and Rome. Lord Sanderson, after being for a long time Under-Secretary of State, was also raised to the peerage. Sir Francis Bertie, some years junior to me, ought to be leaving the Embassy at Paris, after a most brilliant career, under the age limit, but such a man cannot be spared at a critical moment, and so he is staying on with the due reward of a peerage. Robert Meade went to the Colonial Office, earned the highest distinction under many chiefs, including Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, who knew the value of a good man. Drummond Wolf also went to the Colonial Office as private secretary to Lord Lytton in 1858; then was sent as Colonial Secretary to the Ionian Islands, and when they were given up (*proh pudor!*) was offered his choice between a C.B. and a K.C.M.G. Not without an eye to its financial value he chose the latter; but

he was afterwards promoted into far higher regions, as G.C.B., Minister to Persia, where it is said his rather risky stories delighted the Shah, and finally as Ambassador to Spain. All these and others whom I have not mentioned have played their part in the world, contributing their quota to its advancement. And after all, that is what makes life worth the living—that is what distinguishes man from a possible ancestral jelly-fish.

1860.—Those were days of freedom, when men might sit up and feast and amuse themselves as late as they pleased. Grandmotherly legislation had not yet set its canon by which, when the clock strikes the curfew the lights in all hostelries must be extinguished, the grandchildren must fly from bar and refreshment room, and be sent virtuously, even if supperless, to bed.

On the night of the 16th–17th of April, 1860, the inns and public houses in London remained open all night; some twelve thousand persons did not go to bed at all, for on the morning of the 17th the great fight for the championship of the world was to take place—somewhere—between Tom Sayers and Heenan, the great American fighter known as the Benicia Boy. The whereabouts was kept so dark that it was not until the last moment that we who had taken tickets were even allowed to know from what station we were to go. The whole affair was shrouded in mystery. The two principals were being closely watched by the police, and Tom Sayers only made good his escape from Newmarket in a horse-box in the disguise of a stableman in charge of one of the horses belonging to Sam Rogers, the trainer. As for us, we had to hang about Ben Caunt and Nat Langham's public-houses waiting, until we received our sailing orders and rushed off to London Bridge, the start having been fixed for four in the morning.

No fight had ever created so much excitement; it was the first contest of an international character, so that the fever was as high in the New World as in the Old. In the hurrying crowd there were great numbers of Americans, while peers, members of Parliament and men of high degree jostled the bullet-headed, broken-nosed members of the prize ring, pickpockets, bookmakers, publicans and sinners. The Sunday papers went so far as to say —but that was absolutely untrue—that such big-wigs as Lord

Palmerston and a sporting Bishop were present. So great was the interest that even the *Times* devoted three of its sacrosanct columns to a masterly description of the battle. I believe it was the first time that such an honour was conferred upon the prize ring, and it is said that the secret of the authorship is now unknown even to the *Times* chief.

My companion that night was Henry Coke, Lord Leicester's brother, who has himself chronicled the event in his clever book "Moss from a Rolling Stone."

The train stopped near Farnborough. It was an ideal spring dawn, as sweet and fresh as the perfume of the pinewoods could make it, and the birds were singing as if they would burst their throats. It seemed a shame and a desecration to use such a morning as we were about to do; but we were too much excited, too eager, stirred by the cruel lust of fighting, to take heed of that. The ropes and stakes were soon set up and there was an immense amount of pushing and scrambling for places near Tom Sayers' corner, so we had to stand among the Americans near Heenan. That, however, was a good place to see from, for Heenan, having won the toss, naturally chose the corner in which he would have the sun at his back, and those opposite to us had the disadvantage, like Tom himself, of having the sun in their eyes.

When Sayers first threw his cap into the ring, he was dressed in a most appalling suit of dark green tartan. His taste in dress was always grotesque, for during his last years, when he had retired from the ring, he must needs wear hessian boots with tassels, gartered with the inscription "Tom Sayers, Champion" round the knee. But when he stripped he was the picture of an athlete. He was a short, good-humoured looking man, with a tremendous development of the neck and shoulders, which gave the driving power to his blows; his dark skin, brown and tanned, looking as though he had been carved out of old oak, shone in the morning sun. There was no question about it: he was trained to perfection; the muscles in the back especially were so sharply defined that they might have been mapped round with a pencil. Heenan, on the contrary, seemed to me—and many good judges shared my opinion—to have been trained a little too fine, and perhaps rather

too rapidly ; the skin upon his face seemed loose, and that would account for the way in which it swelled and puffed up under the terrible punishment of Tom's iron knuckles.

But one thing struck everybody present : how was Tom Sayers, superb fighter as he was, to stand up against that giant ? Yet he did, and what is more, in my opinion if ever a man won a fight he did. There was a foul claimed in the hurly-burly confusion at the end, but upon that I do not rely. I go by the condition to which his dauntless courage and generalship ended by reducing his enemy.

A great deal was said about the number of times that Sayers was knocked down. What happened was this. Quite early in the fight Sayers had drawn first blood from Heenan, when there arose such a shout of triumph as had hardly been heard since the myrmidons cheered at the death of Hector. Heenan then scored by twice knocking Tom down. Those were fair knock-down blows, and great was the exultation of the American party. Shortly afterwards in guarding a tremendous blow with his right arm, Tom received an injury which rendered it useless. It was said that the small bone was broken, but that was afterwards denied. In any case, he was evidently in cruel pain, and the limb began to swell up and was practically paralysed. This was all the more hard upon him, as in fighting he was wont to rely so greatly on his right—his " Doctor " as he used to call it, because " it would finish off his man." Most men would have given in at once. Not so Tom Sayers. He had lost his best weapon, and he was suffering torture ; the great giant was towering in front of him, threatening and terrible ; but never for one moment did Tom flinch or falter ; his gallant soul forced him to hold on, and having only one arm, he must now fight with his brains.

From that time forth, whenever Heenan delivered one of his slashing blows, there was no guardian right with which to parry it, so Tom caught it as a man catches a cricket ball, yielding to it, and thus went down with the blow, smiling and unhurt. It was the only way—I watched it over and over again, and when at each knock-down the Americans wildly shouted victory for Heenan, I felt that they were counting unhatched chickens. All of a sudden there was a crash which rang almost like metal over the field. Tom

Sayers, ducking before a deadly blow from his assailant, had dashed in with his left and cut open Heenan's cheek with an ugly gash which presently swelled and almost closed one eye at once. The American, big man as he was, staggered under it. From that moment I felt that, given fair play, the battle was won, and that, as I can affirm from what I heard around me, was the fear in the American corner.

Round after round Tom came up, with dogged determination written in his unscarred face, relying upon the same tactics, attacking first one eye and then the other until Heenan was rapidly getting blind. Then came a dastardly act. The American, having got Sayers' head in chancery under his left arm, twisted his right round the rope of the ring and with the purchase so gained tried to strangle Tom, who struck out at him gamely, but was unable to break loose. He was getting black in the face when the umpires cut the rope. It was a mean and a cruel trick and was practically the last act of a fight in which Sayers had all the honours.

The end was at hand. For some time past a blue cloud of policemen had been hovering in the distance without attempting to interfere. Heenan's backers saw their chance, the ring was broken into by the Americans, the police, seeing that matters were taking a nasty turn, rushed in, and the ring became a seething mass of surging, pushing, scrambling men, the principals trying in vain to continue a fight in the midst of what was now a mere angry, howling mob.

As for Heenan, so blind was he that he struck his own second, and it was also said that he hit Sayers when the latter was sitting on his second's knee. A foul was claimed, but it was not possible for the referee to act in such a tumult, or, indeed, to see. There was a general stampede for the train.

Heenan could no longer see and had to be led by two men. There was a little quick-set hedge over which Tom Sayers flew as gaily as a bird. Heenan was in some fashion pushed or dragged through it, a helpless "man-mountain," so mauled that he was scarcely human. Barring his disabled arm, Tom seemed none the worse; his face hardly showed a scratch. There can be no

reasonable doubt that if Heenan's friends, seeing his plight, had not forced their way inside the ropes and broken up the ring, five more minutes must inevitably have given Tom Sayers a glorious victory. As it was, the mere fact that he, one-armed and inferior in height, weight and reach to an adversary who looked fit to crush him, should only have lost his chance owing to a dirty trick, was simply marvellous. It was an exhibition of bulldog courage which in its way will probably never be beaten.

One thing should in justice be recorded. Heenan's backers behaved badly, but they were a very low class, and I am bound to say that I did not see a single American gentleman among them. The men whom I knew afterwards in New York would have been as disgusted as I was.

It was a great event. Heenan was certainly a magnificent specimen of humanity and a great athlete. In build and figure he reminded me of the statue of the dying gladiator. He stood six feet one and a half inches, while Tom Sayers only measured five feet eight and a half inches. But Tom was a wonder. There have been greater boxers—Jem Mace to wit; but as a fighter he was incomparable. Apart from his courage, his tact and judgment were phenomenal—not once did he let an opportunity slip. Relying upon these qualities, his great soul never hesitated when there was a question of pitting himself against such giants as the Tipton Slasher, Aaron Jones and others. He was ready to face any odds. Nat Langham was the only man who ever beat him. The fight with Heenan, which lasted two hours and six minutes, was his last appearance in the ring.

When we think of the sums earned by Carpentier, Jack Johnson and the glove fighters of to-day, it seems almost incredible that fifty-five years ago a fight for the international championship should have taken place for no more than £200 a side, and that the subscription got up for Sayers should have amounted only to a sum of £3,000, settled upon him with remainder to his children, on condition that he should never fight again.

Heenan fought once more in England, with Tom King, who beat him. Curiously enough, on this occasion Sayers was his old adversary's second. Tom King was a splendidly handsome man.

I saw him make his first appearance in London at a benefit at the Canterbury Hall, a tall slip of a lad, six feet two inches, looking like a young Apollo. He had been a sailor and his long arms were phenomenally developed by hauling at the ropes, in days when there were still ropes. He was matched, with the gloves of course, against a huge negro. The two smote at one another, rushing round the ring with as little science as schoolboys; it was a mere "rough and tumble." Harrison, the famous fencing master, who was standing by me, turned round to me and said, "That youngster, properly trained and taught, ought to make a champion." It was a sound prophecy, for Tom King worked hard, made himself into a famous fighter, defeated Jem Mace, the prince of boxers, and finally won his battle with Heenan for £2,000. Prices were beginning to go up. Neither man ever fought again. Tom King, who was a steady, clever fellow, became a bookmaker and gathered together a comfortable fortune.

Heenan was the husband of the beautiful poetess, Ada Isaac Menken, whose talent Swinburne admired so much, and who dedicated her poems to Charles Dickens. When she was on the stage her wonderful beauty created a *furore* in *Mazeppa*. I took a special interest in Heenan because he was a pupil of Aaron Jones, to whom I have alluded in my account of Oxford days, and who went out to America in 1858. In the words of the Chinese sage, we were *Tûng yen* ("same ink"), that is to say, we had dipped our pens in the same ink, which, being further interpreted, means that we were pupils of the same master. So much can a Confucius say in two syllables.

Let me go back a year. In the autumn of 1859 came the volunteer movement—a clarion cry in answer to the memorial of the French colonels who were spurring on their Emperor to make war upon this country. All England was bristling with martial ardour. The Duke of Westminster, then Lord Grosvenor, started the Queen's Westminsters; Lord Elcho the London Scottish; Lord Ranelagh, the "Brompton Garibaldi"* as he was called, the South

* Lord Ranelagh's long hair and beard gave him a certain look of Garibaldi. He was one of the best of good fellows, and had been a gallant soldier in Spain, though in the opposite camp to Wylde. He did much to make the volunteer movement popular.

Middlesex. Most of us clerks joined the movement. Wylde, who had seen service in Spain with Sir de Lacy Evans, became second in command to Lord Ranelagh, and, when his colonel died, succeeded him; I was one of the early recruits of the Queen's Westminsters. We had great fun, but it needed no little courage to appear in uniform, for the grey tunics were irresistible as matter for chaff by the many-headed.

The Foreign Office had always been active in volunteering, for when the Queen reviewed the Volunteers in Hyde Park in 1860, one of the privates in the Queen's Westminsters was old Mr. Byng—"Poodle" Byng—about whose identity Sir Herbert Maxwell has got into such a muddle in his "Life of Lord Clarendon." He had been a clerk in the Foreign Office and had been a private in the Volunteers when they were reviewed by King George the Third. He was called "Poodle" on account of his crisp, curly hair—made a *mésalliance*—and continued to be a pet in Society as a bachelor until his death.

I remember how, in one of the extravaganzas by Planché brought out by Charles Mathews and Madame Vestris at the Lyceum, a huge poodle was brought upon the stage. There was a large gathering of well known people in the audience, and Poodle Byng was in a box with some great ladies. When the great curly dog came to the front there was loud applause, and the stalls turned their glasses upon Mr. Byng, who stood up in his box and bowed his acknowledgments of the compliment. Sir Herbert Maxwell confounds him with Mr. Byng, a Privy Councillor, another well-known man of political importance, whereas the Poodle could not lay claim to being anything—unless, indeed, it was something to have been reviewed by George the Third and half a century later by Queen Victoria.

A clerk in the Foreign Office at that time carried with him a passport to all that was best in political, diplomatic, literary and artistic society. The best clubs, from the Travellers' downwards, opened their doors to him, unless there was something personally objectionable in him. And if the Devil found no idle hands among us for mischief during the daytime, our evenings were bright and well filled, for even during the dullest months there was always

something to be done; not that by my allusion to Dr. Watts I wish it to be inferred that that something was always mischievous —indeed, I think we were fairly good boys, as boys go, with not much more than just so much of wickedness in us as suffices to give a spice to life.

Week-ends were at that time unknown. Saturdays and Sundays were the great days for dinners, and anybody who had attempted to decoy a youth into the country for a Saturday-to-Monday party would have been looked upon as kind, perhaps, but a lunatic certainly. Lady Palmerston's Saturday night parties at Cambridge House, now the Naval and Military Club, were gatherings at which everybody that was distinguished above his fellows in any branch of life was to be seen. Lady Palmerston, gracious, and still showing great traces of beauty, presided over a tea-table in a little inner room to which special favourites were admitted. Lord Palmerston, gay, smiling and full of geniality—still "Cupid" not only to his contemporaries but also to the youngest and most attractive of the matrons, for to the end he retained a great eye for beauty—had a kind word for everybody, young and old. It was not only the Megatherium that was made welcome.

Once I got into disgrace. It was in 1862. Lady Palmerston gave a ball, and I was told off to lead the cotillon. There had been some late nights in the House of Commons, and Lord Palmerston was looking fagged and worn though he was smiling as ever—at three in the morning I thought the hostess would be glad if the ball came to an end and she, who must also have been very tired, for she always sat up for him, might go to bed, so I stopped the cotillon, expecting great praise; but Lady Palmerston, on the contrary, was furious, and for three whole weeks I received no Saturday invitation; but when the fourth Saturday came round I was forgiven, taken into favour again, and bidden to listen to the friendly song of the tea-kettle in the inner sanctum.

The guests at those parties would have furnished the sitters for a whole National Portrait Gallery. The great Lord Shaftesbury, his gigantic stature towering above all others, the solemn gravity of his rather melancholy countenance relieved by its goodness and loving kindness. His wife, Lady Palmerston's eldest daughter,

still beautiful in spite of her handsome family of grown-up sons and daughters; her sister, Lady Jocelyn, irresistibly fascinating; Lord John Russell's diminutive figure, with pinched, eager features, reminding one of Holbein's portrait of Erasmus, the divine begging-letter writer; Lord Clarendon, sunny and handsome, as radiant and eager as if he had not all his life been a martyr to gout and the affairs of State—both poison; Delane, the Jupiter of the *Times*, burly and genial, compeller of men; Borthwick, of the *Morning Post*, who achieved the feat of writing for the *Owl* a letter signed by the French Emperor of such apparent authenticity that the Emperor actually contradicted it. Laurence Oliphant, a mystic in lavender kid gloves, full of spiritualism, strange creeds, and skits upon Society; Macaulay, a whirlwind of talk and knowledge; Lord Sherbrooke, that wonderful Albino blinking out of his pink, almost blind eyes, delighting everybody with his conversation and himself with the belief that his chief joy was in the contemplation of beautiful scenery which, alas! he never saw. The Duke of Newcastle, red and bearded; Mr. Gladstone; Disraeli—for the drawing-room at Cambridge House was a neutral territory, on which foes might meet in pseudo amity. Quin, the great homœopath, dealing in allopathic doses only where wit and fun and good, kindly humour were concerned. Bernal Osborne, always brilliant; Alfred Montgomery, one of the very few remaining bright satellites of the firmament in which Lady Blessington and D'Orsay shone as the chief stars; Charles Villiers, a host in himself; Charles Greville, the writer of the famous memoirs; and how many others!

But why go on making a sort of *Morning Post* list of the famous men of those days! Of some of them I shall speak later. What a dream of Fair Women! The Duchess of Manchester—like the lovely Gunning, twice a Duchess—then in the heyday of her beautiful youth; Lady Constance Grosvenor, with the majesty of a Juno and the smile of a Hebe; Mrs. Dick Bulkeley, who looked as if she had sat for Millais' "Cinderella" and had come straight out of fairy-land; Lady Mary Craven, the very type of lovely English womanhood bursting from bud into bloom; Baroness Alphonse de Rothschild, with liquid almond-shaped eyes, and the sweet complexion of a tea-rose, and how many more!

How well I remember another beauty walking up that staircase; Greuze's Crûche Cassée in person, a frightened child of seventeen, with great, wondering eyes new to the world which one day she was to command! Among the elder women notable were the three glorious Sheridan sisters, Mrs. Norton, to look upon whom was a joy, to talk with her an education. Lady Dufferin, who seemed to be an incarnation of one of her own poems:

> "Oh! Bay of Dublin, my heart your troublin',
> Your beauty haunts me like a fever dream,"

and the Duchess of Somerset, the lovely Queen of the Eglinton Tournament, whose witty sayings ran round the town like a veritable *feu follet.*

Of course the very pick of the diplomatic body was represented. Count Apponyi, the Austrian ambassador, a grand representative of the proud Hungarian noblesse—his wife, a Russian by birth, great amongst great ladies; the Persignys, he the close and well-beloved friend of Louis Napoléon, and his wife—a delightful madcap—a grand-daughter of Marshal Ney—the *brave des braves*—were the most popular of the Ambassadors. D'Azeglio, tall, handsome and rather pompous, the intimate friend of the Shaftesburys, was always a marked figure. Count Nicholas Pahlen, brother of the hero of the conspiracy against the Emperor Paul in 1801—a man of great stature, though bowed by age, pale, stony-eyed and rather grim-looking, with a most surprising knowledge of the family histories of all Europe, must be famous for having, though a foreigner, by his influence forbidden smoking in the morning-room of the St. James's Club for something like a quarter of a century—indeed, so long as he lived.

Another great character was old Count Sztreletzki—a great traveller, diner-out and raconteur. He had a capital story which he used to tell, interlarded, as all his talk was, with little jerky "H'm! H'm's!" given in what the Chinese call the "rising tone," about the Duc de Malakoff who preceded the Duc de Persigny's second appointment as French Ambassador.

The grumpy, coarse old warrior had been invited to Strathfieldsaye in September for partridge shooting. In a field bordering a

wood a number of cock pheasants were strutting about in all the confidence of a close month. This was too much for the Marshal, who was immediately seized with an uncontrollable desire to slay one. The Duke of Wellington consulted Smith the keeper, who opined that "We might put it down in the book as a partridge." So the Marshal stalked an old cock on the ground, blazed and missed him—fired a second time and wounded the bird, who tried to run away, but the ambassador rushed after him, caught him and dashed his brains out against a tree, crying out, "Enfin, brigand! je te tiens!" "That," said the Duke to Smith, as they were watching the achievement, "is the great Field-Marshal Duke of Malakoff, who smoked out four hundred Arabs in a cavern in Algeria." "Well, your grace," answered the keeper contemptuously, "a man who would treat a cock-pheasant like that, and in September too, there is no saying what he might not do to a Arab."

As I write, the ghosts of bygone days rise up before me. The ghosts of men who were wise and great and noble; the ghosts of women who fulfilled their mission in life by being supremely beautiful, gracious, and attractive. That was the secret of their power—of their influence; invested with those regalia they ruled their world.

Of literary or artistic society at Lady Palmerston's Saturdays there were scarcely any representatives; indeed, Dicky Doyle, and Monckton Milnes, afterwards Lord Houghton, were almost alone. Lord Lytton was there, but rather like Macaulay, because he was a statesman, than on account of his success in Letters. And yet there were great men at that time—Carlyle, Thackeray, and Dickens, Tennyson and Browning, were the kings of book-land, but they had to be sought elsewhere. Little Holland House, where the Prinseps and Watts ruled the roast, was a better covert to draw for the priests of Apollo and the Muses than Cambridge House.

Another lady whose salon in Carlton Gardens was famous, was Frances, Lady Waldegrave. Her theatricals and her gatherings attracted the best of London. She was a capital actress, and always managed to collect a good company in support of her own talent. Her brother, Mr. Braham, was stage manager. I was the

jeune premier. At Strawberry Hill she gave delightful, almost historic dinners, which often ended in being moonlit garden parties, where the guests would wander in a midsummer night's dream, until the first glimmer of dawn reminded them that they were some miles from home and that even fairies must be flitting back from the poetry of flirtation under the stars to the prose of daylight.

There can be few matters in which custom, or fashion, has veered round more completely than it has done in the matter of tobacco during my life-time. The Foreign Office was when I entered it the only public department in which smoking was allowed. That was a legacy from Lord Clarendon, who, an inveterate smoker himself, was far too kindly to inflict upon his subordinates what would have been a cruel privation to himself, so we smoked at our work, but the other departments, and the public in general, looked rather askance upon us for the privilege, for smoking was considered to be the outward and visible sign of idleness and incompetence. Smoking in the streets or in the Park was a thing not to be dreamt of. To carry a cigar in Pall Mall or St. James's Street would have caused a man to be classed as " an unredeemed cad."

Bulwer's " My Novel " is not much read now, I fancy, and more's the pity, for it gives a rare picture of what it calls in its sub-title the " varieties in English life " during the early fifties. It was published in 1852. Harley L'Estrange, coming back from abroad, goes for a stroll with his dog in Hyde Park in the evening. He throws himself upon a bench under a tree. " ' Half-past eight,' said he, looking at his watch, ' one may smoke one's cigar without shocking the world. It is the most barefaced lie in the world, my Nero,' said he, addressing his dog, ' this boasted liberty of man ! Now here am I, a freeborn Englishman, a citizen of the world, caring—I often say to myself—caring not a jot for Kaiser or mob ; and yet I no more dare smoke this cigar in the Park at half-past six, when all the world is abroad, than I dare pick my Lord Chancellor's pocket, or hit the Archbishop of Canterbury a thump on the nose.' " So much for smoking in London. In country houses we were badly off indeed. When the ladies left the drawing-room, the men who wished to smoke were sent down to the kitchen or the servants' hall, to fight the rival perfumes of beer, tepid beef, cheese and onions.

The banishment of cigars from the statelier rooms once led to my turning a chance acquaintance into something like a friendship. Sir William Middleton, a grand gentleman of the old school, gave a party at his beautiful place, Shrubland, in Suffolk, in honour of the Duke and Duchess d'Aumale. The gardens were exquisitely beautiful, the house comfort itself, the cook an artist of high repute, but there was no smoking-room. The Duke was a confirmed smoker, and, strange to say, I alone in all that large party was able to keep him company. We were sent off—not to the kitchen, for in his case that would never have done—but to some remote turret, whence it was hoped that no noxious fumes might penetrate the rest of the house, and there we sat and smoked till the small hours.

The Duke was the best of company, telling stories of his old campaigns against Abd el Kader in Algeria and humming snatches of the songs with which the piou-pious were wont to enliven the night round the camp-fire. He had all the verve and dash of the French soldier, combined with vast stores of learning and a fund of ready wit. How the French army loved him! How they delighted in his *esprit Gaulois!* How they revelled in the story of his marching through Burgundy, and coming to a vineclad slope, asking what vineyard it was. "The Clos de Vougeot" was the answer. Out rang the word of command: "Halt! Front! Present arms!" Had the Duc d'Aumale been the eldest son of Louis Philippe, it might have made a difference in the history of France.

Sir William Middleton was a great character, famous for his gardens, in days when gardening was less the fashion than it is now, and for his wigs, innocent frauds which deceived no one, except, perhaps, himself. He had a wig for every day of the month graduated in length. On the 31st of the month he went into Ipswich wearing the longest wig and came out again wearing the shortest—he had been to have his hair cut. One night there was a great dinner at Sir Anthony de Rothschild's "to have the honour of meeting" a royal personage. It was a man's dinner, and Sir William Middleton was sitting next to Mr. Bernal Osborne, who was as bald as a billiard-ball. In handing round some dish one of the

gorgeously-liveried footmen caught Sir William's wig in his aiguillette or a button: off came the wig. The unhappy footman lost his wits, and seeing two bald heads, crammed down the wig on the wrong one. B. O., as he was affectionately called, was delighted, and roared with laughter. To Sir William it was a tragedy.

CHAPTER VII

1861

LORD LYONS

TOWARDS the end of November, 1861, there was a moment when it seemed as if a war between England and the United States was inevitable. By the prudence and tact of one man that dire calamity was averted. It may be doubted whether any diplomatist ever rendered greater service to his country than Lord Lyons did at that time. The part which he had to play would have been delicate in any circumstances, but in his case the difficulties were accentuated by the fact that on one side of the Atlantic he was instructed by Lord John Russell, a minister who seemed to delight in giving offence, while on the other side he had to deal with Mr. Seward, a Secretary of State who was never conciliatory and who introduced into diplomatic argument something of the bullying manner of a *nisi prius* lawyer.

Lord Lyons was blessed with a gift of inexhaustible patience and perfect temper, which throughout the negotiations on the famous "Trent" affair won for him the gratitude of all Englishmen and the respect of his formidable adversary. Personally I had the greatest admiration for Lord Lyons, and welcomed the story of his life so admirably told by Lord Newton. In private life Lord Lyons was charming. His quiet and subtle humour gave a zest to his conversation: "When shall you be taking a holiday and coming over to England?" I asked him once at Paris. "I'm sure I don't know," he answered, in his dry way, with a little familiar twinkle in his eye, "but I've told Salisbury that I really can't wait for the settlement of the Oriental question." At the age of ninety-eight

he would have been still waiting to-day! His old-fashioned courtesy had a charm which was quite characteristic; Lord Chesterfield himself could not have been more of a grand seigneur.

When Lord Newton's life came out, I, full of respect for one of our great chiefs in the diplomatic service, wrote a notice of the book for the *Candid Review*. My excuse for reproducing it here is that it recounts some of the most memorable events which took place during my diplomatic days—it also incidentally alludes to some of the chiefs whom I knew well. Could I do better in honour of Lord Lyons, I would.

The old diplomacy is as dead as Queen Anne, but unlike Queen Anne, without any hope of resurrection. Like many other old institutions, it has been killed by the nineteenth century and its inventions. The position of an Ambassador is still one of great dignity, and he can help largely to keep up the prestige and authority of the nation which he represents. He is consulted, and, if the Government are wise, listened to, but in the determination of policy his initiative has been strangled. He is so far as that is concerned little more than a clerk at one end of a telegraph-wire, whose duty it is to carry out the instructions of Downing Street with as much exercise of power of conciliation as may be.

It is hardly possible to conceive a situation so sudden, so unforeseen, that it would not be the duty of the Ambassador to abstain from any move without having first consulted the Secretary of State and the Home Government. Whether this is altogether an advantage is open to grave doubt. In the warp and woof of complicated and delicate negotiations, there are often intricacies and slight shades of which it is difficult, if not impossible, to communicate the full importance in writing, still more by telegraphy, but which the "man on the spot," if he be worth his salt, can turn to account. In the interchange of views between negotiators, "c'est le ton qui fait la musique," and it is precisely the fine subtleties of the gamut the reality of which it is so difficult to convey by correspondence.

It not seldom happens that the man at the other end of the wire, though he may be thoroughly acquainted with the brutal facts

under discussion, may, for lack of knowledge of the temper of a minister and of the peculiar pressure which at a given moment is being brought to bear upon him by the internal politics of the country which he represents, be inclined to some move which the astute agent, wary and watchful, would easily avoid, by smoothing difficulties and counterchecking dangerous arguments.

It is difficult in these days to realize the initiative power exercised by some of the older diplomatists. A Russianized Pozzo di Borgo forces on an alliance between Austria and the country which employs him for the annihilation of a brother Corsican. A Stratford de Redcliffe, in the execution of a policy of which his own government hardly conceals its hatred, plunges five great nations in war. Such masterful agents as these are unthinkable to-day. Not much more astonished would the world be by the dispatches of ministers accredited to the long since defunct small German and Italian Grand Ducal Courts—proud records of august handshakes prolonged beyond those accorded to rival plenipotentiaries, chronicles of snarlings and bickerings over some vital question of precedence at a Court supper or dinner.

These were subjects upon which the lesser men expatiated in deadly earnest, deeply penetrated with a sense of their importance —and yet they were not altogether without their value, for we owe them some measure of grateful respect, since the judicious handling of such twaddle occasionally brought to light the talents of a man fitted for the nice conduct of real affairs. Indeed it was such a case that first gave the Foreign Office an inkling of the worth of a man who in the story of later years was destined to play a dominant part, the importance of which not even his excessive modesty and self-effacement could keep altogether in the background.

There is little need to call Dr. Johnson into court to prove that " nobody can write the life of a man, but those who have eat (sic) and drunk and lived in social intercourse with him." Lord Lyons has been lucky in having such a biographer as Lord Newton, who not only had daily social intercourse with him, " eating and drinking with him " for some years, but being moreover a man of his own profession and his intimate subordinate, though at the time

when they were together only a brilliant youngster, had something more than the ordinary opportunities of estimating his chief's public worth. Lord Newton is, as the House of Lords well knows, a master of subtle humour and delicate irony; he writes excellent English—terse, bright and to the point; and with these qualifications it is no wonder that he has produced a book, which, seeing the momentously important events in which Lord Lyons took a leading part, must be largely consulted in all attempts to write the history of the latter half of the nineteenth century.

I use the words "leading part" advisedly; for Lord Lyons was essentially a leader, guide, and instructor, upon whose wisdom those who had the ultimate decision of affairs were able to lean with confidence. For the relation of intricate negotiations, Lord Newton has been happily documented with material that is entirely new and unpublished. The word "intricate" need scare no reader, for he has marshalled his facts so skilfully that much which might have been obscure is crystal-clear.

The great Lord Lyons—for he was great—was born in 1817, the son of that famous old sea-dog and diplomatist, Admiral Sir Edmund Lyons, afterwards the first Lord Lyons. Like his younger brother, he was sent to sea when he was little more than a child—only ten years old. But he was quite unfitted for a sailor's life; he was a martyr to sea-sickness, which he never got over, and so, as Lord Newton says, "it was probably with no slight satisfaction that the navy was exchanged for Winchester." But it is a coincidence worthy of note that the two diplomatic achievements which chiefly made him famous were, as we shall presently see, both of them connected with the sea and shipping and maritime law.

One would have liked to have had some knowledge of his early days, for the childhood that was to father a man of so marked a personality could not have been without interest, but upon this point his biographer is silent; indeed, a bare page and a half is all that is devoted to transferring him from Winchester to Christchurch, where he took his degree in 1838, and to the thirteen years during which he was eating out his heart as an attaché at Athens (where his father, the Admiral, was minister), despairing of pro-

motion and half-minded to leave a profession in which he was destined to be so distinguished a figure.

In 1853 we find him at Rome, a post of some importance, though, as England had no diplomatic relations with the Vatican, it was always filled by an official of no higher rank than one of the Secretaries of Legation at Florence, and afterwards at the Italian Court when it was at Turin, and later transferred to Florence. It was a post which needed no little skill and tact, and was later occupied with conspicuous ability by Lord Odo Russell (Lord Ampthill).

Lord Lyons' experience showed, as he himself wrote, that "in spite of my peculiar position, notwithstanding a very strong opinion to the contrary, at Rome, as at most other places, one succeeds best by transacting one's business in the most plain and straightforward manner, and through the most direct channels. By acting on this principle and by being very quiet and unobtrusive, I think I have in part allayed the suspicions which are felt towards us always more or less at Rome, and I am certainly on a better footing with Cardinal Antonelli than I had at all expected to be."

This saying of his—uttered at the very beginning of his first experience of an independent post—is worth quoting, for it gives us the keynote of his whole diplomatic career, and reveals the secret of the success which he achieved when he was afterwards placed in positions as difficult and as delicate as any that a diplomatist was ever called upon to face.

Four years later Lord Lyons was called upon to settle "one of those trivial questions which so deeply exercised the diplomacy of a former generation"—a question, indeed, which it is nowadays difficult to imagine occurring outside of the Court of the Grand Duchess of Gerolstein. Lord Normanby, K.G., Ex-Viceroy of Ireland, was British Minister at Florence, and had gone on leave, furious, in circumstances which were grave indeed.

The Pope having visited Florence, a banquet in his honour had been given by the Grand Duke, and the diplomatic body were invited; but to their great indignation they were not seated at the *Tavola di Stato*, the sovereign table. Lord Normanby demanded an apology, and the *chers collègues* having agreed to support him, backed out at the last moment; so Lord Normanby

went off fuming and fussing, and "uttering dark threats that he would not return unless the apology was forthcoming." Mr. Lyons was summoned from Rome to act as *chargé d'affaires*, and upon him fell the task of making the Tuscan Government apologize. For three weary months a correspondence at which so essentially practical a man as Lyons, with his subtle sense of humour, must have laughed in his sleeve, used up reams of paper, until at last, after "a severe rebuke" from Lord Clarendon, the Tuscan Government ate some infinitesimal particle of dirt, "the injured Lord Normanby returned to his post, and Lyons resumed his duties at Rome." For the full enjoyment of Lord Newton's account of the episode it is almost necessary to have known the two men as I did—the Turveydrop-like pomposity of the one, and the simple sober dignity of the other, gifted with the most delicate feeling for proportion.

It was in March, 1858, that Lord Lyons had his first great opportunity. Diplomatic relations with Naples having been broken off for some years, Mr. Lyons received orders from Lord Malmesbury to proceed to Naples to inquire into the case of the *Cagliari*. It was a difficult matter and created a great excitement at the time.

The *Cagliari* was a mail steamer plying between Genoa, Sardinia and Turin, and on 25th June, 1857, "a number of Mazzinians who had taken passage in her, seized the master and crew, altered the course of the vessel, landed at the Island of Ponza in Neapolitan territory, where they liberated three hundred political prisoners, and subsequently proceeded to Sapri, in the neighbourhood of Salerno. Here they again disembarked, expecting the inhabitants to rise in their favour, but encountered a superior force of Neapolitan troops, who killed or captured the whole party, while the *Cagliari* was seized by Neapolitan warships as she was making her way ostensibly to Naples. Some weeks later it was ascertained that among the prisoners in Naples were two English engineers, Watt and Park by name, and it was stated that these two men were entirely ignorant of the conspiracy, and had been forced by the conspirators to work the engines under threats of being summarily shot if they refused."

Naturally the British Government demanded that these two men should at least have fair trial, and Lord Clarendon, then Foreign Minister, there being no Legation at Naples, wrote personally to Signor Carafa, the Neapolitan Foreign Minister, on their behalf; but the Neapolitan Government shuffled and delayed, and in March, 1858, the two men were still in prison, where owing to cruel treatment after the manner of the Naples of those days, "the health of both was completely broken down, and Watt had become partially insane." It was in these circumstances that, Lord Malmesbury having succeeded Lord Clarendon at the Foreign Office, Mr. Lyons was ordered to proceed to Naples to investigate the case. He was successful. The two Englishmen were released, and after further negotiations an indemnity of £3,000 was paid to Watt and Park, and finally the *Cagliari* was placed at Mr. Lyons' disposal.

The question had been complicated by our relations with Sardinia, and Lyons had been ordered to use threats of our making common cause with that Power against Naples should his demands be refused; but as Lord Newton points out, it was an additional satisfaction for Lyons to be able to say, "Far from threatening, I did not even go so far as my instructions warranted, for I did not say that His Majesty's Government proposed that the mediator should retire at the end of three months, nor did I tell Signor Carafa that I was myself ordered to go back to Rome if the mediation should be refused at the expiration of ten days."

The same methods of suave and gentle persuasion which answered so well in this case were to be the secret of his success a few years later in another hemisphere and in far more critical circumstances. The conduct of the *Cagliari* case resulted in his being appointed Minister at Florence, and in the following November (1858) "came the offer of the Washington Legation, an offer which, with characteristic modesty, he accepted with considerable misgivings as to his competence." It was a good thing for England that any such scruples as he may have entertained were overcome. His mission to Washington was big with fate. In the same month his father died and he succeeded to the peerage.

In February, 1859, Lord Lyons sailed for Washington in H.M.S. *Curaçao*. In these times of huge liners and rapid passages, with the possibility already in view of still swifter crossings of the Atlantic in airships, it is startling to read of a voyage which occupied forty-two days, "a period which must have been singularly disagreeable to a man who, in spite of some years' naval service, always suffered from sea-sickness."

It was no doubt something of a relief to Lord Lyons to meet with a most courteous reception when he presented his credentials to Mr. Buchanan, the then President of the United States, for he might well have anticipated that, at any rate at first, the Legation at Washington would not be a bed of roses. He had to take up the succession of Sir John Crampton, a diplomatist who, though, first as secretary of Legation and afterwards as minister, he had served for a good many years at Washington, had never succeeded in making himself popular with the United States authorities.

There had been much ill-feeling between the two countries on account of enlistments for foreign legions at the time of the Crimean War; Crampton, who did not realize the susceptibilities of the Americans, had been very active in this recruiting scheme, and matters had reached a point of such tension that in May, 1856, President Pierce broke off relations with Crampton, who had to return home.

Things had more or less quieted down in the meantime, but in December, 1858, a Presidential message containing "some rather ominous passages with regard to the relations between England and the United States" was delivered. There were at the time not a few signs of underground forces at work which might at any moment break out into open eruption. Lord Lyons would have been superhuman if he had not felt some emotion at entering upon duties which must manifestly be fraught with unusual difficulties; still, "the sentiments now expressed were friendly in character and showed a disposition to settle pending difficulties in an amicable spirit." Statesmen so minded, and animated by this conciliatory feeling, might reckon upon being wholeheartedly seconded by the new minister.

For a year or two Lord Lyons had no very crucial question to face. The San Juan "difficulty," in which the United States Government showed the most conciliatory temper, and the question of the possible absorption of Mexico by the United States, in which Great Britain had no more than a philanthropic concern inspired by the feeling that it would have threatened the extension of slavery, could hardly be reckoned as coming under such a category.

In the meantime, in such negotiations as he had to conduct, his conciliatory and unobtrusive policy, his great discretion, had won for him golden opinions and much respect among all classes of American politicians; that, together with the popularity which the Prince of Wales never failed to gain and which was a conspicuous result of His Royal Highness's visit to Canada and the United States in 1860, happily placed the relations between the two countries on such a footing as had probably never existed since the separation. The value of this was felt when the great strain came. In 1861, Mr. Buchanan had faded into that Stygian darkness in which ex-presidents of the United States flit as phantoms of a past dignity.

Abraham Lincoln ruled in his stead—Abraham Lincoln, tree-feller, rail-splitter, village postman, and one of the greatest men that ever made history.

This tall, gaunt, raw-boned, lantern-jawed man, fresh caught from Illinois, with none of the graces which the gods have given, save that supreme grace of truth and pellucid honesty which sweetens all intercourse, would have been an easy man for a minister like Lord Lyons, himself the very incarnation of transparent sincerity, to deal with. His Secretary of State, Mr. H. Seward, was a man of another kidney. Mr. Seward was a New York lawyer, a rough, coarse, unconciliatory nature, one of those impossible people who mistake bluster for courage, and braggadocio for strength—so unmannerly was he that on one occasion when he was a guest at a dinner-party at the British Legation, he talked so offensively to certain of the diplomatists present that Lord Lyons, a past-master in the art of turning a sharp corner, broke up the conversation by saying that as host it was now his

duty to go and talk to the ladies. It needed all the tact, patience and self-control of Lord Lyons to treat with such a man. That he succeeded in taming him into something approaching to the amenities—I had almost written the decencies—of diplomatic intercourse, was one of Lord Lyons' most notable achievements.

In 1860 the United States were on the brink of a volcano. The secession of the Southern States was imminent, and on the 10th of December Lord Lyons wrote to the Duke of Newcastle: "It is difficult to believe that I am in the same country which appeared so prosperous, so contented, and one may say so calm when we travelled through it. . . . Our friends are apparently going ahead on the road to ruin with their characteristic speed and energy. The President [Buchanan] is harassed beyond measure."

Lincoln was inaugurated as President in March, 1861, and in the following April the dogs of war were let loose with a vengeance, "and the capture of Fort Sumter [by the Confederates] signalized the fact that a population of little over five millions of white men had had the audacity to challenge over twenty-two millions of their fellow-countrymen." The blockade of the southern ports became all important for England. Lord Lyons, writing to Lord John Russell, said: "If the United States are to be permitted to seize any ship of ours wherever they can find her under their jurisdiction on the plea that by going to a southern port she has violated the U. S. Customs Laws, our commerce will be exposed to vexations beyond bearing, and all kinds of new and doubtful questions will be raised. In fact, this, it seems to me, would be a paper blockade of the worst kind. It would certainly justify Great Britain and France in recognizing the Southern Confederacy, and sending their fleets to force the U. S. to treat British and French vessels as neutrals in conformity with the law of nations." Mr. Seward was apparently convinced of the reality of this danger, but when he saw how violent the President and his colleagues were, veered round and became "the fiercest of the lot." Lord Lyons went on to say, "I am in constant apprehension of some foolish and violent proceeding of the Government with regard to Foreign Powers. Neither the President nor any man in the Cabinet has a

knowledge of foreign affairs; they have consequently all the overwhelming confidence in their own strength which popular oratory has made common in this country."

The position of the British Minister at Washington was one of supreme difficulty. The Government had wisely made common cause with France, but no clear instructions as to procedure had been issued to Lord Lyons,—Lord John Russell contenting himself with saying that he relied upon " the wisdom, patience and prudence of the British Minister to steer safely through the danger of the crisis." The Law Officers of the Crown gave it as their opinion " that we must consider the civil war in America as regular war—*justum bellum*—and must apply to it all the rules respecting blockade and letters of marque, which belong to neutrals during a war." They went on to express a pious wish that both parties should agree to the Declaration of Paris regarding the flag covering the goods and the prohibition of privateers.

Pious wishes do not always bear fruit, and seeing the vital importance to England, and especially to Lancashire, of trade with the Southern States, it was evident that blockade running would soon become a common practice, and, seeing how ineffectual that blockade was, would be resorted to with the result that considerable fortunes would be amassed by it.

Matters were not made easier by the negotiations which were taking place at home between Lord John and Mr. Adams, the new American Minister, who had succeeded Mr. Dallas. Mr. Adams said that the language held by Lord John to his predecessor had given umbrage in the United States, and might even lead to the termination of his own mission unless the unfavourable impression should be corrected. He complained, moreover, of the recognition of the South as a belligerent. Lord Newton very justly points out that Lord John Russell was honest in his endeavours to show that England, as a whole, was in sympathy with the North—popular feeling was naturally all on the side of the abolition of slavery. The ovation which Mrs. Beecher Stow received in London was not yet forgotten, and " Uncle Tom's Cabin," now a forgotten book, was still selling by thousands. But Lord John Russell as a negotiator was neither conciliatory nor tactful,

and it was certainly remarkable that while on the other side of the Atlantic Lord Lyons was using all his tact, all his discretion, both natural and trained, to soften the asperities of Mr. Seward, Mr. Adams, on this side, was confronted with the querulous acrimony of the English Foreign Minister.

There was, moreover, another British statesman whose clumsy activities and hardly concealed partiality were peculiarly exasperating to the men of the North. Mr. Gladstone never quite shared the indignation and horror with which slavery was regarded by the bulk of his fellow-countrymen, and when, later in the conflict, the cotton famine and the attacks of the American Press had alienated many Englishmen from the North, there were "demonstrations of pleasure" in the House of Commons at McClellan's defeat, and Mr. Gladstone declared that "Jefferson Davis and the leaders of the South have made an army; they are making, it appears, a navy, and they have made what is more than either, they have made a nation."

Language such as this, held at the moment when the fortunes of the Federals were at their blackest, could not but arouse the bitterest feeling. Mr. Gladstone was apt to be anything but happy when he dealt with the susceptibilities of foreign nations. A passage in a speech of his, delivered on the 17th of March, 1880, during the famous Midlothian campaign, is unforgettable. I shall allude to it at length elsewhere. His utterances in regard to the War of Secession in America were even more dangerous than this. Austria might be offended by his insults, but they would not, could not, lead to open hostilities. But there were moments during the great contest across the Atlantic which were crucial, and no responsible statesman should have hampered friendly negotiations, the object of which was to avoid a fratricidal war between two peoples of the Anglo-Saxon race. It is necessary, in order to understand the difficulties with which Lord Lyons had to deal, to show what were the elements of conflict working on both sides of the Atlantic which he had to meet and overcome. That he succeeded, that when he went home on leave to consult with the Cabinet he was able to write to Lord Russell, "I had quite an affectionate parting with the President this morning," was one

of those triumphs of peace of which the laurels are greener and more fragrant than any that ever hid the baldness of a Cæsar.

The course of the great War of Secession is followed with conspicuous ability in Lord Newton's life. It is impossible to say more about it here than that throughout those terrible years in which gifts of the most consummate tact and judgment were put to the test, Lord Lyons continued to work with patriotic patience and with such great restraint that one is almost tempted to say silently; indeed, in one letter to Lord Russell he himself talks of "my language, or rather silence." One only goal was ever before his eyes, and that goal the prevention of any cause or excuse that might lead to an outbreak of hostilities between the two countries. I can go into no details here, but there were two episodes in which his moderating influence curbed the hot heads of both nations.

The first was the famous case of the *Trent*. On the 8th of November, 1861, "the English mail steamer *Trent*, one day out from Havana, was met by the American warship *San Jacinto*, and stopped by a shell fired across her bows. She was then boarded by a party of marines, and the officer in command of the party demanded a list of the passengers. The production of the list having been refused, the officer stated that he knew the Confederate delegates to Europe, Messrs. Mason and Slidell, to be on board, and insisted upon their surrender. While the discussion was in progress, Mr. Slidell made his appearance and disclosed his identity. Thereupon, in defiance of the protests of the captain of the *Trent* and of the Government mail agent, Mr. Slidell and Mr. Mason, together with their secretaries, were seized and carried off by force to the *San Jacinto*, and taken as prisoners to New York."

When the news arrived in England the excitement and indignation were such that no one who witnessed them will ever forget that fever of wrathful resentment. On the other side the less thoughtful portion of the American public worked itself up into a perfect delirium of patriotic enthusiasm. Captain Wilkes, the commander of the *San Jacinto*, was raised to the dignity of a national hero; banquets were held in his honour and the Governor

of Boston made a speech in which he said "That there may be nothing left to crown this exultation, Commodore Wilkes fired his shot across the bows of the ship that bore the British lion at its head." Promotion to the rank of Admiral was the heroic captain's reward.

Peaceful and conciliatory as Lord Lyons was, and deeply concerned as he had shown himself in the avoidance of giving or of unnecessarily accepting any cause of offence, he was as convinced as the Home Government that in this procedure of Captain Wilkes the limit at which patience was possible had been reached, and it must have been a relief to him to receive the despatch in which "The United States Government were informed that International Law and the rights of Great Britain had been violated, that Her Majesty's Government trusted that the act would be disavowed, the prisoners set free and restored to British protection. Should this demand be refused, Lord Lyons was instructed to leave Washington."

Before the despatch was sent off, on the 30th of November, it was sent for approval to the Queen. Her Majesty was constantly in the habit of amending Lord Russell's despatches, always rather slipshod affairs, and often couched in offensive language. She never did so with greater effect than upon this occasion when, acting upon the suggestions of that most sagacious adviser, the Prince Consort, written at a moment when, as he himself said, he was so ill that "he could hardly hold the pen," she so toned down such expressions as might have wounded the sensitive feelings of the United States that the despatch, when it was received by Mr. Seward, raised no dissatisfaction, and that he "handsomely acknowledged the great consideration which had been shown by Lord Lyons in his conduct of the negotiations."

In their deep sorrow it must have been a happy memory for the Queen, the Prince of Wales, and his brothers and sisters to feel that the last official act of the husband and father whom they loved and venerated, on the eve of his entering into that peace which passeth all understanding,* should have been largely the means of preventing what would have been a tragedy indeed.

* The Prince Consort died on the 14th December.

It was a peace which was "a victory no less renowned than war."

Mr. Seward's answer to the British despatch was a note "of the most portentous length, abounding in exuberant dialectics, but the gist of which was contained in the two following short paragraphs:

"'The four persons in question are now held in military custody at Fort Warren, in the State of Massachusetts. They will be cheerfully liberated.

"'Your lordship will please indicate a time and place for receiving them.'"

The rest of the note might as well have been left unwritten.

Messrs. Mason and Slidell were accordingly conveyed in an American ship from Fort Warren to Province Town, and there embarked on a British warship for Halifax, it having been expressly stipulated that the transfer should not take place at night. From Halifax they proceeded to Europe.

The affair ended even better than Lord Lyons had hoped. On the 19th of December he wrote: "I don't think it likely they will give in, but I do not think it impossible that they may do so;" and to the very end he was preparing for the worst. All the greater must have been the relief when, on the 27th, Mr. Seward's answer came. "The Americans," he writes on the 31st of December, "are putting the best face they can upon the surrender of Slidell and Mason, and as far as depended upon me I have done everything to make the pill as easy to swallow as possible. But I cannot disguise from myself that the real cause of the yielding was nothing more or less than the military preparations made in England." Coming from him, these words sound like a warning, profitable, if we would but listen, even in these days.

There are very few great events in history the credit for which it would be just to ascribe to any one man, and so perhaps Lord Newton is right when he says that "It would be an exaggeration to attribute solely to Lord Lyons the credit of having successfully prevented the calamity of a war between England and the United States." Energetic action of the Home Government, the wise moderation of the Queen and the Prince Consort, the loyal moral support of the French Government, and the good sense of the

Americans, each and all of them played a restraining part. But when all is said and done, it was to the extraordinary patience and delicacy of touch of Lord Lyons, who never once made a mistake—never under the most goading provocation lost his head—that the ultimate success of the negotiations was due.

"In after years," Lord Newton writes, "Lord Lyons frequently expressed the opinion that if there had then been telegraphic communication across the Atlantic it would have been impossible to avert war, and it is more than likely that he was correct, although it is improbable that many people realized it at the time." It was a notable case of a victory gained by the man on the spot.

If a difficulty of the most threatening character had been conjured away there were soon others to which a war such as that which was raging was bound to give birth. Enlistment, desertion and other pretexts drove scores of men to seek protection of the consuls both in the North and in the South, on the ground of being British subjects.

An article from a Southern newspaper is worth quoting: "We can conceive nothing more disgraceful than the conduct of Irishmen, for example, who have been cursing the British Government ever since they could talk, who have emigrated from their country to escape the British yoke, but who now run to an English Consul and profess themselves subjects of Queen Victoria in order to evade their duties in the land of their adoption." That, of course, alludes to the South, but Lord Lyons himself on 11th May, 1863, writes no less bitterly: "I have been unwell for more than a month, and am beset by a quantity of small vexatious business concerning the wrongs of the British subjects who have suddenly proclaimed their unswerving loyalty to the British Crown and demand my protection."

Also there was the Alabama case—a very real stone of offence—and the bitter Anglophobia of Admiral Wilkes; all matters in which the United States Government behaved generously and even magnanimously. The work, however, which devolved upon Lord Lyons was stupendous; in November, 1863, he recorded that he had already received nine hundred notes from Mr. Seward in that year. But there was one episode so comic that it is diffi-

cult to repress a smile in alluding to it. Is there not a comedy in every tragedy? Is there not a gravedigger in *Hamlet*?

A great change had, during the last year or two, come over the terrible Mr. Seward. Tamed by the British Minister, he was now roaring as gently as any sucking dove, and would come to feed out of the hands of Lord Lyons or M. Mercier, the French Minister, with all the caressing softness of a pet lamb. In August, 1863, in a confidential conversation with Lord Lyons, he expatiated upon the necessity of reviving a better feeling between Great Britain and the United States, and of making some demonstration in return for the visit of the Prince of Wales before the war, which had been productive of the happiest results.

Now it was the turn of the United States to make a corresponding display of good will, but it was difficult to devise the means of doing so, as the President could not travel and America possessed no princes. Would Lord Lyons think the matter over? Lord Lyons could not see the necessity for such a step; but Mr. Seward returned to the charge, and Lord Lyons, who was not slow in seeing his object, wrote: "The only conjecture I can make is that he thinks of going to England himself. He may possibly want to be absent for some reasons connected with the Presidential contest. If he thinks that he has himself any chance of being taken as a candidate by either party he is the only man who thinks so at this moment. It is, however, generally considered to be an advantage to a candidate to be out of the country during the canvass." (In view of recent Presidential elections these last words are amazing. Times have changed since 1863.) To think of a visit by Mr. Seward, of all men, as an adequate compliment in exchange for the Prince of Wales' visit! Needless to say, that demonstration did not take place.

However conciliatory Mr. Seward might have become, mainly owing to the correct attitude of the British Government in detaining Confederate ironclads in England, public feeling in America, and even in certain members of the Government, was bitterly hostile. Mr. Wells, who was Naval Minister, and Mr. Chase, the Secretary of the Treasury, were cases in point. The latter knew well that he was harping upon a popular string when on [an

electioneering tour he talked of " taking old Mother England by the hair and giving her a good shaking." Mr. Sumner, another distinguished politician, outdid him in rancour.

Lord Lyons' difficulties and trials were never destined to cease so long as he remained at Washington. For the details of these I must refer the reader to Lord Newton's masterly narrative. In a mere appreciation such as this it is impossible to do more than hint, even where the subject tempts the writer to expatiate. To add to his troubles, the long years of grinding work and harassing anxieties had begun to tell upon the health of the Minister. A trip to Canada to escape for a while from the great heat of Washington could not restore a man who was evidently suffering from nervous prostration. Lord Lyons felt at the end of 1864 that he could hold out no longer. It was not surprising. During the year 1864 no less than 8,326 despatches and letters were sent out by him—mostly drafted by himself, but in any case, revised and corrected by him. His attachés and secretaries were at work from nine in the morning until seven, without an interval for luncheon—and often they had to return after dinner and write into the small hours. That is the sort of life that is led in times of stress by those members of the diplomatic service whom the public is apt to look upon as mere dancing dogs ! As I shall show later on, the Legation at Washington during the war was not the only theatre of such work.

Lord Lyons went home and took up his abode with his sister, the Duchess of Norfolk, and on 16th March, 1865, he wrote to Mr. Stuart, the *chargé d'affaires* at Washington : " You will have seen that I have gone out of the service altogether and have become a gentleman at large, without pay or pension. My health did not admit of my fixing a time for going back, and the Cabinet became nervous about leaving Washington without a Minister in these critical times."

Lack of space forbids me to reproduce the very handsome expressions of regret at Lord Lyons' departure which he received both from Mr. Seward and from Lord Russell. He had, indeed, served both countries well, and as Lord Newton says in regard to the letter of the former : " It is satisfactory to realize that these

two men, between whom so many encounters had taken place, parted on terms of friendship and mutual esteem." They appreciated one another's good qualities, and that Lord Lyons retained in his heart a soft corner for the rugged New York lawyer is shown by the fact that "in subsequent communications with his own Government Lord Lyons frequently expressed the hope that Mr. Seward would continue to be responsible for the foreign policy of the American Government."

* * * * * * *

Rest and the society of his relations—the best of all restoratives to a man of Lord Lyons' affectionate nature—in contrast to the strenuous labours of those four exhausting years, soon effected a cure. He was out of the service, but such a man could hardly be spared, and in the month of July, 1865, he was appointed to the Embassy at Constantinople, in succession to Sir Henry Bulwer (Lord Dalling). It would have been difficult to find two men more different than Bulwer and Lord Lyons.

Bulwer was a clever curiosity, and a born intriguer. On leaving Cambridge, he had been successively a Greek patriot, a cornet in the Life Guards, an ensign in the 58th Foot, had retired upon half-pay, had achieved success as a gambler and dandy (not quite of the first water), and finally entered the diplomatic service. In appearance, in his old days, he was a small shadow of a man, as wizened as Tithonus, with an insane desire to show the frame of an athlete. To this end he used to encase himself in numberless great-coats, from which, when he came to the Foreign Office and the heat became intolerable, he would pray some kindly clerk to set him free, and the poor old mummy was unrolled. As Ambassador at Constantinople he had ample opportunities for the exercise of his peculiar talents; he was often in hot water, but, like a famous bishop, always contrived to come out with his hands clean.* His methods were not those of Lord Lyons, they were far more nearly in accord with those of the Russian Ambassador, General Ignatieff, whom the Turks called "the father

* Bishop Wilberforce's answer to a friend who asked him why he was nicknamed "Soapy Sam."

of lies." Lord Lyons' transparent honesty must have been an astonishment to Constantinople, which was used to being a hot-bed of underhand machinations, plots and counterplots, and where no diplomatist trusted anybody else, least of all the colleagues with whom he was supposed to live in brotherly love. However, it was a time of comparative calm, and Lord Lyons, accompanied by his two trusty henchmen, Malet and Sheffield, whom, with his usual affection for his friends, he had insisted upon taking with him, was able to enjoy all the charm of that most captivating city in a peace of mind to which he had long been a stranger.

The Danubian principalities were a worry, as they always had been, and as, now that they have been exalted into Kingdoms with a rich importation of ready-made monarchs from abroad, they continue to be. Crete was another difficulty, as it has been ever since the days of the three evil Kappas. Still there were troubles which, after the years of perpetual pin-pricks and imminent international dangers on the other side of the Atlantic, must have been looked upon by Lord Lyons as no more than enough to keep his armour from growing rusty.

In 1867 Lord Cowley resigned the Embassy at Paris, and the post was offered by Lord Stanley to Lord Lyons. Lord Cowley was a model diplomatist of the old school, self-restrained, undemonstrative, absolutely ignorant of those arts of advertisement which form too large a portion of the equipment of the statesmen of to-day. He had been brought up in the strictest sect of diplomacy, and only six years, during which the Embassy at Paris had been held by Lord Normanby, separated him from the time when his father held the same post. The first Lord Cowley was one of those three famous brothers, the other two being the great Duke of Wellington and the Marquess of Wellesley, of whom it would be idle and out of place to say aught here. The second Lord Cowley, afterwards created an earl, had gained an influence at the Court of the Tuileries which on more than one occasion saved a difficult situation. Never was this more conspicuously shown than when, in 1860, Mr. Cobden was sent to Paris on his famous mission in connection with the treaty of commerce. The negotiations, so long as Mr. Cobden insisted on

conducting them by himself, were none too prosperous. Indeed, there came a day when after a protracted conference, Mr. Cobden came back to the British Embassy ready to throw up the sponge. Lord Cowley comforted him and said: "Let me see what I can do." He skilfully turned the corner and the treaty was signed. But Cobden claimed and received all the glory.

It was in the footsteps of this great diplomatist and statesman, whose quiet dignity, no less than his political sagacity, had made him a very real factor in all international affairs, that Lord Lyons was to follow. He felt that it was a difficult succession; he wrote to him: "When I first heard that you were likely to give up Paris, I felt, as I think I said in my letter to you, alarmed at the prospect of the Embassy's falling into other hands. I should have been indeed alarmed had I then known into whose hands it was likely to fall." This was characteristic modesty, but Lord Lyons need have been under no alarm. Lord Cowley might well feel that his successor would be worthy of him, and it is hardly too much to surmise that his advice was sought by Lord Stanley before the appointment was made. Lord Cowley was acquainted as no other man could be with all the forces at work in France from the Emperor downwards; he knew the whole intricate network of French politics, and he was in a position to take the measure of all the men who might be "in the running" for the Embassy. It is hardly thinkable that so judicious a statesman as Lord Stanley should not have consulted him. Be that as it may, the wisdom of the choice was fully justified.

Lord Lyons had now reached the highest reward which his profession had to offer. The Embassy at Paris must always be, in importance as in dignity, superior to any other diplomatic post. In the days of which we are writing it was, and probably still is, more or less an annexe of the Foreign Office in Downing Street. There are few international questions in which the interests of England and France are not almost equally concerned, whether they be acting in opposition to one another or in concert. Every despatch which reached the Foreign Office, no matter whence it came, was copied for Paris. The labour which it entailed upon the Ambassador was Herculean; indeed, since the day after all

consists of only twenty-four hours, it may be doubted whether even such indefatigable workers as Lord Cowley and Lord Lyons could have found time to read and digest all the matter which was sent to them. There were certain excellent and worthy ministers whose verbosity experience must have taught them to put on one side. Still, even the absolutely necessary work of reading was exhausting.

It really seemed as if, in some sense, Lord Lyons was destined to be the stormy petrel of diplomacy. He was sent to Florence, and the Grand Ducal reign collapsed. He went to America, and the War of Secession broke out. He was promoted to Paris, and there came the great catastrophe. So shrewd an observer as Lord Lyons could not fail to see that the throne of Louis Napoléon was tottering. The poor Emperor was surrounded by difficulties with which he seemed quite unable to cope. Abroad there were many troubles, not the least of which was the question of the occupation of Rome, which meant the bolstering up of the Papal Government. Then there was the growing power of Russia and such matters as the annexation of the Grand Duchy of Baden to the North German Confederation. Greek affairs, the perennial question of ceding Crete and other portions of the Ottoman dominions to Greece, was another source of disquietude.

In France there was a great feeling of discontent, owing, as Lord Lyons said, "mainly, I imagine, to the inconstancy of men, and Frenchmen in particular. In fact he has reigned eighteen years, and they are getting tired of so much of the same thing and want novelty." The glitter of the Empire had ceased to dazzle, and even the brilliant Cent Gardes no longer captivated the women and aroused the enthusiasm, tempered by jealousy, of the men.

In his own family the Emperor had, as everybody knew, to deal with a wife who was taking more and more part in public business, in spite of her declaration that she meant to abandon politics for works of charity. Lord Lyons' account of an interview with Her Majesty is very instructive on that point.

Then there was Prince Napoleon to be reckoned with—a very astute politician, with something of the prophet's eye and, like many another prophet of old, but little of a comfort to the ruling

power. With him also, for he was a frequent visitor to the Embassy, Lord Lyons had much talk, during which—notably upon the subject of the Roman question—it is strange to be told that the Prince expressed his views in the hope that they would thus be brought before the Emperor—the English Ambassador to be the intermediary between Prince Napoleon and his cousin! This Prince, who in many ways was a deplorable person, was able to impress Lord Lyons by his ability and shrewd common sense. "He spoke with great animation and remarkably well."

In the spring of 1868, Prince Napoleon made a tour in Germany. He returned fully impressed with the danger of a war with Prussia, with the folly of attempting to annex the Rhenish provinces, and with the vanity of talking of disarmament (how history repeats itself!), seeing that Prussia alone had two hundred thousand men under arms. Though opposed to war, if war there must be, it should be made at once; the consolidation of Northern Germany was proceeding surely and rapidly; the adhesion of Southern Germany would soon follow, and "hereafter war would have to be waged with Germany thoroughly united and perfectly organized. . . . He considered that an unsuccessful war would overthrow the Emperor and his dynasty and send the whole Bonaparte family to the right-about; a war only partially successful would rather weaken than strengthen the Emperor at home; while a thoroughly successful war would simply give His Majesty a fresh lease of Cæsarism, and adjourn indefinitely the liberal institutions which he [Prince Napoleon] considered essential to the durability of the dynasty. The Prince is not without apprehension as to war being made this season [1868]. He fears weak men, and he looks upon the Emperor as a weak man. He fears the people who surround His Majesty, the generals, the chamberlains, the ladies of the Palace."

These views of Prince Napoleon, which are among the many new contributions to history contained in Lord Newton's book, seemed well worth giving *in extenso*. The Prince was not the only man who looked upon the relations with Germany in a spirit of grave anxiety. What the intimate views of the Emperor may have been upon this subject it would be hard to say. When, in 1863, he sulked in his tent, his abstention from interference in the

invasion of Denmark contributed not a little to the aggrandizement of Prussia; it was his fate to be continually hatching broods of homing chickens.

In the meantime the Emperor was trying to bring about a conference of the Powers to pull the chestnuts out of the fire for him in regard to the Roman question. A conference was his panacea for all diplomatic ailments. In this he was warmly seconded by the Empress, who, in a long conversation with Lord Lyons, in which "she spoke with much grace both of manner, and, I think, with very great ability," urged the importance and propriety of non-Catholic, as well as Catholic, Powers taking part in it.

Lord Stanley's comment upon this letter was characteristic. He said that the Empress's "frank and sensible conversation" furnished the best reason he had received yet for keeping out of the affair altogether. Why should we be asked to bear for the Emperor the responsibility which he had assumed? Prince Napoleon shared Lord Stanley's views. He thought that the best service England could render the Emperor would be to advise him to give up the idea of a conference and settle the matter with Italy by satisfying, at least in a certain measure, Italian aspirations. "He declares," writes Lord Lyons, "that Italy will never be quiet, and that the unity of Italy will never be assured until she gets Rome for her capital. He believes that the Emperor's support of the Pope is very unpopular with the great majority of the French people, and that it will, if persevered in, be a serious danger to the dynasty." . . . He wishes England to advise the Emperor that "He will not be able to hold his own unless he abandons the system of personal government and gives a large increase of liberty."

Grumbling and growling everywhere! The Emperor at his wits' ends and talking of "moral influence," that last poor refuge of a desperate statesman!

In spite of political troubles, and the manifest lack of sympathy on the part of England, Louis Napoleon was not slow in discovering the charm and sterling merits of Lord Lyons, whose tact could not fail to ingratiate him wherever he went. "The Emperor talked to me a long time and related to me interesting anecdotes, some very amusing, of the conduct of various persons towards him in

past times." But unfortunately Lord Lyons was no gossip, and so these " very amusing " stories have been lost.

How entertaining it would have been to be carried, like Cleofas by Asmodeus, *le diable boiteux*, through the roof, and allowed to listen unseen to the talk between the two. To the world at large Louis Napoléon in the Tuileries was a mystery as silent as the Sphinx in the desert, for so the newspapers described him. Few men suspected that in the grey volutes of the brain which lay behind that wooden mask there was a sense of rather sardonic humour, which, when he chose to give it play, made him the best of company. We may be sure that the Ambassador, no less gifted in that respect, would not be slow to throw back the ball in these encounters of wits.

Like the Emperor, Lord Lyons had a quite irresistible trick of giving a whimsical expression to a commonplace subject. He, too, was in his quiet way a humorist. The personal relations between him and the Emperor were always pleasant and sometimes, perhaps, cordial. Lord Lyons liked His Majesty, though, in one of those rare outbursts of confidence in which he revealed his thoughts, he confessed to Lord Newton that he had formed no very high opinion of his abilities.

The attempt to arouse in England interest in the Roman question was fruitless, but he never quite gave up the hope of inducing the English Government to act as pacificators between France and Germany. But he had lost confidence, he was out of spirits, and when Lord Cowley, in August, 1868, paid him a visit at Fontainebleau, he told Lord Lyons on his return that he found him much depressed and aged—a disappointed man, who would willingly, had it been possible, have retired into private life. The glamour of the early glories of his reign had faded into mist, and he was weary.

A little later in the same year Lord Clarendon, whose influence with him and with the Empress, whom he had known from her childhood when he was Minister at Madrid, was a matter of common knowledge, dined with His Majesty at St. Cloud, and having just returned from Berlin, was able to repeat to him the pacific language which he had heard from the King and Queen of Prussia and General

Moltke. This was good hearing, but the Emperor was at no pains to conceal his anxiety lest anything should occur that might arouse the feeling of the army and the nation, and he expressed his earnest wish that "England should step in to enable France and Prussia to withdraw with honour from their present antagonistic attitude."

Lord Clarendon, with that nobility which characterized all his dealings, communicated to Lord Lyons all that he had learned both at Berlin and at St. Cloud, although he knew that it would be for the benefit of his political opponents. But by the end of the year there was a change of Government in England, and to the Emperor's great joy Lord Clarendon, the friend whom he loved, was once more at the Foreign Office.

A visit of the Crown Prince of Prussia to England enabled Lord Clarendon to tell Lord Lyons that His Royal Highness was to the full as peacefully inclined as his father, and indeed he went a step further, for while he personally was willing to see the army placed upon a peace footing, the King would not hear of it. But how strange it seemed at a moment when we in England have been proposing naval holidays to read talk of the same nature earnestly exercising the minds of men nearly half a century ago.

In spite of all pacific assurances, the thunder-clouds, black and ominous, were gathering. War was imminent; Prince Napoleon went so far as to express the opinion that it would break out in the spring; he was wrong by some eighteen months. Much was to happen before what was an anxiety should be crystallized into a storm ending in a tragedy such as the world had seldom or never seen.

There was a Cretan conference; a whole web of intrigue about the Luxemburg railway, and the Belgian question, threatening the peace of Europe; a proposal for a conference on international postage, until Lavalette told Lord Lyons that the country was sick of the very name of the thing; and in spite of conferences and pacific talk, trouble was brewing in every direction.

Meanwhile Lord Lyons was subjected to an annoyance personal to himself, but none the less real. In the month of June, 1869, Lord Lyons was requested by Lord Clarendon to return to England to vote on the Irish Church Bill. He strongly objected to doing

so on the very proper ground that an Ambassador ought to abstain from taking a hand in party politics. Lord Clarendon, however, urged by Mr. Gladstone, returned to the charge, and in such pointed terms that he could not refuse. How sorely it went against the grain with him is plain from a letter which two years later he addressed to Lord Granville, when the latter begged him to come once more and vote on the Army Purchase Bill. That Lord Lyons was right in maintaining that it was inexpedient for an ambassador to vote on party questions must be manifest. Diplomatists, like other permanent civil servants, are bound to serve ministers of whatever party may be in office. If they assume the attitude of party men it is not in human nature that they should command that intimate confidence which is essential to their relations with the members of the Government which they have helped to oppose.

It is a wise and cardinal rule of the English public service that its members are neutral. The higher the position the greater the obligation in this sense. Lord Lyons was deeply penetrated with the importance of a principle which it is a matter of surprise to find two such large-minded statesmen as Lord Clarendon and Lord Granville eager to set aside for party purposes. It seems worth while to call attention to these two incidents, because they show what was the opinion of one of the most sagacious and prudent of men. Mr. Gladstone's idea that the Government had a right to call upon an ambassador for his vote needs no refuting.

In the course of the correspondence that took place at the end of 1869 it was clear that Lord Clarendon had lost all faith, if he ever had any, in his friend Louis Napoléon. In one letter he went so far as to say, "If the Emperor attaches value to the English alliance, he ought not to sacrifice it by a sneaking attempt to incorporate Belgium, by means of a railway company and its employés. If he wants war it is a bad pretext for doing that which all mankind will blame him for." Later, on the 31st of August, he writes with prophetic instinct: "The prospect of affairs in France gives cause sufficient for anxiety, and I have an instinct that they will drift into a republic before another year is over." Indeed, the Fates were busy with the thread of the Empire's life.

Abroad the attempts to induce Prussia to disarm pursued their

gentle but ineffectual course as before. Lord Clarendon did more than even his best to try and persuade Bismarck. The man of iron and blood was polite, but unmoved. The Duc de Gramont, known in his salad days as "*le bel Agénor*," had become Minister of Foreign Affairs, and when the thunderbolt of the Hohenzollern candidature for the throne of Spain fell in the early days of July, the ex-dandy Duke lost no time in intimating to the British Ambassador that France would go to war with both Spain and Prussia rather than allow a Hohenzollern to reign at Madrid. . . . "The election of Montpensier might be looked upon as a *mauvais procédé* towards the Emperor and the dynasty, but the putting forward a Prussian was an insult and an injury to all France." At the same time the warlike Duke gave Lord Lyons to understand that he would be grateful to England if she would use her influence with Prussia in order to bring about a solution of the difficulty.

To the unspeakable sorrow of all England, and we might say of Europe, Lord Clarendon had died on the 27th of June. It now fell to the lot of Lord Granville to deal with foreign affairs. On the 6th of July, he paid a generous tribute to his predecessor when he wrote: "It is very sad that I should be writing to you in the place of one who would have had so much personal power in such a matter as this."

What I have to say of the war of 1870 and the causes which led to it must be told elsewhere; here I am dealing really with the years of the American rebellion, and have only skimmed the first volume of Lord Newton's great book.

In surveying the twenty years during which Lord Lyons was Ambassador in Paris, the reader is fairly bewildered by the mass and the magnitude of the questions with which he had to deal. The Presidency of Thiers—his fall; the election of Maréchal Macmahon; Franco-German relations, always a threatening subject; the purchase of the Suez Canal shares; the Treaty of San Stefano; the proposal that Lord Lyons should go as English plenipotentiary to the Congress of Berlin, which to his great relief was settled by Lord Beaconsfield going himself with Lord Salisbury; the election of President Grévy; the Eastern Question; the concert of Europe, always playing out of tune; Tunis and Tripoli; the

rebellion of Arabi; England abandoned by France in Egypt; the pranks of the mountebank General Boulanger—the Napoléon de Café Concert, an Agamemnon with Paulus, the comic singer, as *vates sacer*, and "*en r'venant de la revue*" as his anthem; changes of Government without end—these are but stray items in the work with which that silent, self-contained, prudent man, gifted with the true wisdom of statesmanship, had to wrestle. That he did so without ever making a mistake accounts for the esteem in which he was held by so many successive secretaries of state. Their confidence was shown by the numberless cases in which he was left to act upon his own discretion.

He never gave greater proof of wisdom than when he declined Lord Salisbury's offer to him in July, 1886, that he should take over the seals of the Foreign Office. He was then sixty-nine years of age. He was in failing health, worn out by the long exercise of almost superhuman industry; indeed, he was nearer to his end than he himself imagined. In a singularly graceful letter Lord Rosebery praised his decision. He continued his work at Paris for another year, but on the 1st of November he resigned and was created an Earl. On the 28th of the same month he had a stroke of paralysis, and in a week he was dead.

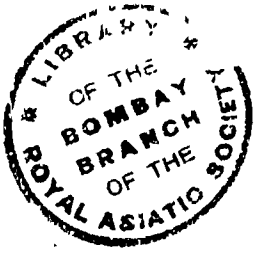
It would be difficult to improve upon the portrait which Lord Newton draws of his former chief. The impression left upon the mind of the reader must be recognized as true by all those who had the good fortune to know him. As a public man he was absolutely devoid of all petty ambition; he never thought of advertising himself, on the contrary he pushed modesty almost to a fault; himself a most indefatigable worker, he expected something of the same quality in his subordinates, who loved him for his just, honest and generous nature. In his private life he was simple and unostentatious, yet always dignified. For the amusements in which men of his caste are wont to find relief from the cares of business, he had no liking. In no form did sport attract him. He was content to go dowagering for an afternoon drive with Sheffield, the "Hare," so called from his large, almost flapping ears, and Dog Toby. The party were a familiar sight to Parisians, who would watch the strange trio with some amazement.

We are told that women had so little attraction for him that there never was even the suspicion of a flirtation in his life. For his family, on the other hand, for his father, his brother and his sisters and their children he entertained the most devoted love, and his friends, especially Sir Edward Malet and Mr. Sheffield, were held by him in an affection which they on their side returned with interest. They became inseparable.

" It was Lord Lyons's fate," writes Lord Newton, " to represent this country at most critical periods during wars in the course of which England, while desiring to observe the strictest neutrality, aroused the bitterest hostility on the part of the belligerents."* These words contain no exaggeration.

His prudence, patience, and self-restraint steered the ship through many hidden dangers. There is an old saw which runs : " Blessed is the minister who does not make history." It is given to few men to make history; it is given to still fewer to prevent others from making it. These are the greatest of all, and it is among them that Lord Lyons takes an honoured place.

* " The Life of Lord Lyons," by Lord Newton. 2 vols. Edward Arnold, 1913.


LIBRARY OF THE BOMBAY BRANCH OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY

CHAPTER VIII

THE WEDDING OF THE PRINCE OF WALES

ON the 10th of March, 1863, I had the honour to be present at the wedding of the Prince of Wales in St. George's Chapel at Windsor. A number of extra gentlemen-ushers were appointed for the occasion, and by the kindness of Sir Spencer Ponsonby Fane, always a good friend to me, I was one of them. It was a magnificent sight, something to remember for a life-time. The streets of Windsor and all the approaches to St. George's inside the glorious old Castle were thronged with people radiating the happiness of the day—the Eton boys of course in full strength, ready to cheer till their loyal throats should burst. All that was greatest and noblest in the land was present in the Chapel; there cannot be many people still alive who were there, for of course the guests were all of them men who had already made their mark in the world; and even of those who were on duty, I was probably the youngest. Happy the bride upon whom the sun shines! It was a bitterly cold day, but bright, and a life-giving sun, blazing through the stained-glass windows, shone upon a gorgeous display of glittering uniforms, the banners hanging from the Garter Knights' stalls, the tabards of the heralds, the gold coats of the state trumpeters combining with the brilliant gowns and flashing diamonds of the ladies, made such a riotous feast of colour as the world could hardly match.

The procession of the Knights of the Garter ought to have been an imposing spectacle, but the good Knights, arrayed in their blue velvet robes, resplendent with their golden collars and stars, instead of marching decorously two and two with a suitably solemn space

between the pairs, had contrived to club themselves into a clumsy knot made up of figures of various sizes and shapes in which they looked anything but dignified, the tall and stately Lord Shaftesbury towering over the puny form of Lord Russell. They badly needed a stage-manager.

The trumpets bray out triumphantly announcing the procession of the Bridegroom, stately, solemn, full of dignity.

Once more the trumpets. Amidst all the glory of that wonderful day nothing could equal the procession of the Bride. The touching tenderness of her girlish, rosebud beauty and graceful figure, as she passed up the nave, her eyes shyly downcast, looked like the vision of the Princess of a Fairy Tale. Her entry into London had been the triumph of a conqueress—her entry into St. George's Chapel was the assumption of a Queendom over the hearts of England from which nothing can ever dethrone her.

It was a sad sight to see the great Queen, then only entering into middle age, looking down from her gallery to bless her son's happiness! When the trumpets heralded the Wedding March amid the clatter of arms of the saluting Guards, the pealing of the organ, the roll of the kettledrums, and the roaring salvoes of artillery, it was impossible not to feel that her thoughts must be travelling back to the death-chamber hard by, where, some fifteen months earlier, she entered upon the long, lonely years of her widowhood. Half hidden, her pathetic figure struck the one sad note, the *memento mori*, in all that frenzy of rejoicing, all that radiance of pomp and splendour, the celebration of a nation's sympathy with a well-beloved Prince.

Perhaps I ought rather to say a Prince whom the people were ready to take to their hearts; for he was still a lad, and had not yet had the chance of showing what he really was worth.

At the risk of forestalling such story as I have to tell I would fain insert here a slight attempt at an appreciation of that young bridegroom as he appeared in later life and during his too short reign as King. A comparison of the power exercised by him and that of the great Mother whom he succeeded almost inevitably comes within the scope of such an endeavour.

It is one of the penalties of a high position that whereas the failings of those who occupy it are apt to be viewed through a magnifying glass, their good qualities are too often examined through the wrong end of a telescope. Even those whose nature and knowledge would prompt them to deal out praise in full measure, speak under the restraint of a reticence the motives of which are not difficult to understand; and the more exalted the subject of this post-morten examination of character, the more severe is that restraint almost bound to be.

Obituary notices of King Edward the Seventh have been plentiful enough. The two most important appreciations of him have been Sir Sidney Lee's, in the "Dictionary of National Biography," and the two essays in Lord Esher's recently published book, entitled, "The Influence of King Edward." It is hardly necessary to say that the two views of King Edward's character differ *toto coelo*. But then, whereas Sir Sidney Lee had no intimate knowledge of the King, Lord Esher describes a man with whom he lived for many years in that confidential intimacy which Dr. Johnson held to be the necessary condition for writing a good biography. The worst of it is that though Lord Esher's book will be widely read now, it is bound to share the fate of all books, which like men, have their day and then die. *Habent sua fata libelli*. With the "Dictionary of National Biography" the case is different: that will remain on the shelves of every library, public and private, for many generations, and will be consulted as an authority long after the writers, like their subjects, shall have faded into the misty land of ghosts. That is why articles in such an important book of reference should be subjected before publication to the strictest and most impartial examination. Afterwards it is no use. "The written word stands." Even should Sir Sidney Lee himself, in the fuller life of King Edward upon which he is said to be engaged, endeavour to modify, soften, or even contradict some of the statements in his article, it will not be possible for him to correct the false impression which those pages will create in the minds of men of a future generation. Historians will turn to them and will say that since this was written immediately after the tragedy of 1910 by so eminent a man of

letters, it must represent the contemporary judgment of the King's personality. Great is the responsibility.

The picture which Lord Esher gives of the childhood and boyhood of the Prince of Wales under the somewhat austere and strict tutelage of Queen Victoria and the Prince Consort cannot but fill his readers with sympathy. Here was a child, a boy, a young lad, hedged round by rules and regulations which must have pressed upon him like a strait-waistcoat. Ardent and full of the highest spirits, he was cramped by such a discipline as mercifully none of us have known. What would the boy not have given for a game of football? How he would have loved to drive a cricket ball over the boundary! He, whom I have seen as a man of fifty, booted and skated, keenly playing a game of hockey on the ice? No games were there for him, no free association with playmates of his own age. A boy or two, carefully selected, sent up to Windsor from Eton to stand about in hopeless shyness in the presence of tutors, or even under THE Eye.

He was sent to Oxford, but strict care was taken that he should have no part in the life of the university. He might hear lectures —he might see nothing. It was as if you were to send a lad to the theatre and set him down in a stall with his back to the stage.

The first time that I saw the Prince of Wales was when his father brought him to Eton as a little boy of twelve to hear the "speeches" on the Fourth of June. What a diversion for a child of his age, to listen to us sixth form boys spouting Demosthenes, Æschylus, Cicero! I can see his poor bored little face now. It was pitiful. He is accused of never having been bookish. How could he be when, like Swinburne, he was never allowed to read even Walter Scott's novels? Swinburne, however, when he came to Eton quickly emancipated himself. The Prince of Wales never had a chance of reading as a boy, and later in life he had no more time than was needed for studying the newspapers, which he did most conscientiously. Not upon him alone was the grip of the iron hand clenched. The instructions to his Governor, to his tutors, to the gentlemen-in-waiting—authentic documents cited by Lord Esher—make one feel the choking atmosphere of boredom through which the Prince struggled into manhood.

How the kindly, genial Prince, who was to develop into what Dr. Johnson called a "clubable" man, must have chafed under this prison treatment! How he must have longed for emancipation! He had a temporary foretaste of it when in 1861 he joined the Grenadier Guards* at the Curragh. He always looked back with pleasure upon that short soldierly experience.

When we think of the very strict severity of the Prince Consort, and when we remember the great part which he played as the Queen's confidential political adviser, notably in the Trent affair, where his wisdom helped to soften the asperities which Lord Russell had aroused in the United States, we are apt to forget how young he was when on the 14th of December, 1861, he died—barely forty-two years of age.

He had not always been popular, and the world had been jealous of his interference in public affairs; but all those jealousies were soon forgotten and the Prince's worth was realized after his death. That cruel sorrow gave the Queen an opportunity of using the Prince of Wales in his father's place, making him her confidant and private secretary, and guiding him through the labyrinths of that constitutional lore of which she was such a mistress. Needless to say, the opportunity was not made use of. On the contrary, in spite of the advice of more than one minister—notably of Mr. Gladstone—the Queen politically held her eldest son at arm's length.

It was not until a few years before her death that he, already a middle-aged man of fifty, was allowed access to State papers. Shut out as he was from any participation in public affairs, his great activities were turned into two channels—social and ceremonial, and most admirably he fulfilled those very wearisome duties of royalty of which he relieved the Queen, who from that time forth worked diligently, devotedly, but unseen. Indeed her life was wrecked. She had accustomed herself to lean upon her husband, who had been her lover, her guide, and her adviser for twenty-one years of a marriage which had been blessed with a happiness rarely found in a station of life where love matches are the

* Not the 10th Hussars, as Sir Sidney Lee has it. Of the 10th he was titular Colonel-in-Chief.

exception. To the outside world he might seem stiff and formal. The prescriptions of a small German Court would account for that; but to her he was always gentle, kind, sympathetic. He was an exceptional man; tall and of a commanding figure, strikingly handsome, highly educated, accomplished, judicious; he lacked but one quality—that of geniality—to make him universally popular, and even that was no misfortune, for it may have saved him from stumbling into those pitfalls with which the path of men so gifted, especially when they are in a commanding station, is beset.

One side of his nature was curious. He was essentially a shy man. He would enter a room to meet some visitor whom he had summoned, sidling up, as it were, along two walls of it before stepping forward to hold out his hand. That same shyness accounts for a good deal in his character; for its aloofness and, above all, for an apparent dislike, strange in so able a man, to surround himself with all that was best and most distinguished in science and art. Such men as Darwin, Huxley, Hooker, Tyndall were practically unknown to him. He preferred the second rate. So in Art, as portrait painter, he was satisfied with Landseer and Winterhalter. Landseer no doubt was an excellent delineator of dogs and deer, but it did not seem to occur to the Prince that a man might be a first-rate painter of animal life and yet fail signally with Kings and Queens. As regards Winterhalter, it is the world's misfortune that the portraits of the principal personages who made the history of the fifties and sixties of the last century should have been practically his monopoly.

With music, especially sacred music and the Opera, there was great sympathy at Court. The Prince was an accomplished and scientific musician and the Queen had a lovely voice which was well-trained by that wonderful old singer Lablache. But for Literature there appeared to be no place. I have a sort of recollection that Dickens was once sent for to Buckingham Palace, but that was not until 1870, the year of his death. The Prince was greatly pleased with Thackeray's "May-day Ode" on the opening of the Exhibition of 1851, and he loved Tennyson's "Idylls of the King,"—they aroused in him the ideal of the chivalry which he

worshipped. But there the matter ended, there was no literary society, no love of books. The Prince and the Queen were absorbed in politics, and their relaxation was taken in other directions, such as the theatre and the Opera.

I dwell upon all this because I am anxious to show how King Edward's up-bringing accounted for that indifference to books with which his biographers have taxed him. It is the fashion to talk with contempt of what is called the Early Victorian Era. In Letters, at any rate, the reproach is undeserved. There was no lack of considerable men. Putting on one side the three great names that I have already cited, we had Carlyle, Browning, Froude, George Eliot, the Brontës, Ruskin and others. In the memorandum for the guidance of the gentlemen appointed to attend on the Prince of Wales they are told to encourage the Prince " to devote some of his leisure time to music, to the fine arts, either drawing or looking over drawings, engravings, etc., to hearing poetry, amusing books or good books read aloud ! " But of that delightful solitary communing with books which are the living souls of great men—such books as those written by the contemporaries of whom I have spoken, there is not a word.

Fancy an ardent boy of seventeen spending his leisure time in turning over books of drawings and prints ! Would it not be mental starvation ? How much more human would it be for a boy to read " Pickwick," " Martin Chuzzlewit," " Vanity Fair," " Scenes from Clerical Life," " The Princess," " Jane Eyre " !

For my part I would far rather see a son of mine frown over the savagery of Mr. Rochester, or laugh at Mrs. Gamp and Mr. Pecksniff, than waste smiles of young-lady-like admiration upon Retsch's outlines or the " Keepsake." But the whole memorandum is one of the strangest of documents, reading as if it had been composed for the use and guidance of a seminary for young ladies.

There can hardly ever have been so self-contained a Court as that of the Queen and Prince Consort in the early days of their married life. Outside of the Ladies- and Gentlemen-in-Waiting there were very few intimates. Of these the chief was Baron Stockmar, the retired physician, who had been Court Doctor to King Leopold and the Princess Charlotte of Wales, and who afterwards became

mentor and political tutor to Prince Albert. At Windsor or Buckingham Palace he came and went as he pleased; his room was always ready and he was always welcome. As to that, there was not a little jealousy, and that jealousy was accentuated by his privileges, notably in that whereas the English grandees had to wear knee-breeches and silk stockings, the Baron was allowed to encase his lean and shrivelled limbs in the warmth of trousers! A terrible outrage, intolerable to the said grandees; the intimacy was bad enough, but the trousers were galling!

Another welcome guest was the Prussian Minister, Baron de Bunsen, a really remarkable man. But perhaps the friend who came next to old Baron Stockmar in the estimation, or perhaps I might say affection, of the Prince Consort, was M. Sylvain Van de Weyer, the Belgian Minister, who was not only a diplomatist of conspicuous ability, but also a bibliophile and an accomplished man of letters. He was one of the most agreeable men that I ever knew, and the power of his personal charm upon the Court was enhanced by the fact that he was the representative of the dearly-loved and venerated uncle both of the Queen and Prince.

The English statesmen were invited for short visits to Windsor or to dinner at Buckingham Palace, and, as was necessary, there was a Minister in attendance at Balmoral or Osborne, but after Lord Melbourne and until Lord Beaconsfield's time, long after the death of the Prince Consort, who had no liking for him, there was no familiar intercourse with any Cabinet, Whig or Tory. Both the Queen and the Prince Consort worked indefatigably, but it was chiefly desk work—work in the dark.

The long, silent night of sorrow in which the Queen spent the forty years which remained to her after the death of the husband who had been the dayspring and the bright glory of her life, more than ever estranged her from taking any delight in that personal intercourse which is the chief lure of society.

I remember as a boy seeing a drawing which impressed me greatly. On a mountain-top sat a solitary female figure, draped in black—was she a Sibyl, a Witch, a Norn? I know not. Her face rested on her right hand and her weary, yearning eyes looked out upon the world beneath her, a figure of mystery mounting guard. Queen

Victoria in her loneliness, watching from on high over the welfare of her people, reminded me of that tragic figure. She was one of those " Princes " who, as Bacon said, " do keep due sentinel."

When the Prince of Wales assumed the *toga virilis*, his emancipation heralded a new epoch in the social life of England; but it was not until two or three years after his marriage that its full effect was felt.

Under the new dispensation the hospitalities at Marlborough House and Sandringham were lavishly magnificent, while the small and very intimate society at Abergeldie was delightful. The Prince of Wales and the Princess shone as host and hostess: both delighted in being surrounded by their friends, and naturally in their position it was easy for them to gather together all the most brilliant and most distinguished people, some of whom would even travel from across the Channel to be present at entertainments the splendour of which became famous.

These may seem at first sight to be trivial matters, yet they had their significance. We must remember that when the Prince of Wales married he was very young—only just twenty-one. He was full of high spirits and endowed with a vitality such as I have rarely seen equalled. He was debarred, as I have said above, from helping his mother in her public work, and he could only find an outlet for his marvellous energies in what might have been barren pleasures, had he not used them as means of becoming intimate with some of the older and more prominent of the ministers and statesmen of both parties.

The invitations to Marlborough House and Sandringham were by no means confined to the butterflies of society. As often as not the Prince might be seen standing apart in earnest talk with some such man as Lord Granville, Lord Clarendon, Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Disraeli, Bishop Wilberforce, one of the great diplomatists, Delane, Billy Russell the famous War Correspondent, Generals, Admirals, men of science. But why dwell upon this? It is well known that it was through conversation and the Press that the Prince acquired that marvellous fund of information which enabled him to hold his own in any company.

His memory was phenomenal: he seemed unable to forget. The

business of Kingcraft is not one that it is easy to learn. It is impossible for a King to specialize in any one subject; but he must be sufficiently posted in the trades of all sorts and conditions of men to be able to discuss intelligently the subjects upon which they have to address him. This King Edward did to perfection, and we must remember that this power was not acquired all of a sudden, like a miracle conferred upon him by anointment at his coronation; it was the result of long years of patient listening and inquiry—of those same long years which his detractors would have us believe were spent to exhaustion in the pursuit of frivolous occupations, and in the selfish sacrifice of duty to pleasure. No more false charge was ever brought against a man in his exalted position.

That he was the acknowledged leader in the society of which he was the darling is perfectly true. It is also true that he spared no pains to promote the pleasure of others. But however late he might stay at some entertainment or at the Marlborough Club, he was up again at earliest dawn to attend a review at Aldershot or Spithead, or take part in a ceremonial in some distant part of the country, where he would appear as gay and as pleased as if he was fulfilling the one ambition of his life. His strength was wonderful; he knew not fatigue. That was an immense help to him. Later in life he allowed himself more rest; but as a young man he seemed to be almost independent of sleep.

It has been said, cynically enough, that a King has no friends. That might be the case with a Roi Soleil who divided mankind into three categories—Royal personages, white men, and black men. Our King, on the contrary, was so full of human sympathy and loving-kindness for others, that he won for himself an affection such as is given to few men in any position.

I remember in the quite early days of the Marlborough Club, in 1870, I was standing talking with a friend who died not long since, an old admiral. Close by was a knot of men in the heyday of youth, with the Prince in the centre, a happy, joyous band, he the choragus of the fun and merriment. My friend turned to me and said: "See! Is there one of those men who would not lay down his life for him?" That was true of him in those youthful days, and it remained true to the end.

And now I must skip many years, because I am anxious to show how wrong it is to suppose that King Edward shirked work.

One night I was dining at the Club, after King Edward had come to the throne, but before he had moved from Marlborough House into Buckingham Palace. He knew that I was in London for two or three days alone, so he sent over to ask whether I was at the Club, and if so to bid me go across to him. I found him in his private sitting-room, all alone, and we sat smoking and talking over old times for a couple of hours. Towards midnight he got up and said: "Now I must bid you good-night, for I must set to work"—pointing to a huge pile of the familiar red boxes. "Surely," I said, "your Majesty is not going to tackle all that work to-night!" His answer was: "Yes, I must! Besides, it is all so interesting;" and then he gave me one of his happy smiles and I left him. "So interesting!"—that was the frame of mind in which he faced his work—he, the man who we are expected to believe could not be brought to attend to business!

I have no desire to speak unfairly of the article in the "National Biography." In many passages it lavishly praises some of the great qualities of the King, and yet the general impression conveyed is unfortunate. The reader of the future—and it is for the future far more than for the present that such an estimate has importance—will rise from the study of this biography with an altogether false appreciation of its subject. He will see in it the portrait of a man with many lovable characteristics, indeed, but with little conception of the high functions to which he was called; he will see a Prince self-indulgent, impatient of duty, with little political acumen even in those matters of foreign policy in which he took the highest interest; giving little concern to home affairs, "unremitting in his devotion to social pleasures"; showing "aloofness from the working of politics and a certain disinclination hastily to adopt his private plans to political emergencies." I hope to show that it is in his more favourable comments that Sir Sidney Lee is right, though unfortunately in his hands the beam inclines too much on the wrong side.

The King's tact, his magically conciliatory charm, a power of fascination which can rarely have been equalled, his judgment of

men, have been universally acknowledged. He carried into public affairs a sympathy and kindliness which bore rich fruit. He could feel with a Gambetta as he could feel with the proud chieftain of the Hapsburgs. To a Scottish manse, to a Norfolk parsonage, he could carry the sympathy of a friend, the true message of love. He could enter into the troubles of a humble cottager on his estate with as much interest as he could listen to the family difficulties of a Duke. Above all, he could forgive, and that is perhaps the rarest of human powers. Those who know could cite more than one instance of its exercise. Nor was all this confined to mere words. He would spend himself on behalf of a friend, he would labour to see righted some poor wretch who he thought was being treated unjustly. His courage was beyond proof.

Such was the King as I knew him, and I am not alone in my estimate of him: Sir William Harcourt, a good judge and surely no sycophant, said of him that he was the greatest King of England since William the Conqueror. A burning Radical came away from his first interview with him, saying: "That is the greatest man that ever I had speech of." That man knew him better later, but he never altered his opinion.

To one feature in the King's character I must reverently allude. He was a convinced Christian, devoutly observing all the ordinances of the Church. In Scotland he regularly attended the Parish Kirk at Crathie. I can call to mind one Sunday at Abergeldie in 1870 when so fierce a storm was blustering outside that it was impossible to leave the Castle. The Prince, then a very young man, read the Church of England's service at home. Never did I hear that beautiful liturgy more impressively read. The music of his voice, the perfect diction—so conspicuous in his public utterances—gave value to every word of those inspired prayers. They struck home. The devotional sense, obviously genuine and true, would have been contagious in a crowded cathedral. It was no less so in the little room in the old grey castle; he made us feel with him.

There is a charge brought against him in the "National Biography" (after he had mounted the throne, mark you!) that "at times he enjoyed practical joking at the expense of his friends." Nothing could be more misleading. When he was a very young

man—a mere boy—he would laugh at the wild pranks of some of the youngsters by whom he was surrounded. What could be more natural? They might play tricks upon one another, but never either as Prince or King did I, during nearly half a century, see him take active part in any such games himself. He was always mindful of his dignity, and for many years before he came to the throne I can affirm with certainty that no such tricks would have been permitted in his presence.

My recollection of the King which I wish to place on record is that of a character made up of various qualities—a monarch deeply impressed with the duties and obligations of his exalted station; a man intensely human, and, let his critics say what they will, altogether lovable.

The death of Queen Victoria on the 21st of January, 1901, was not unexpected, and yet she had been so long the figure-head of the Constitution that when the blow came it was felt as a shock. It was not only the death of a great monarch, it was the death of an epoch, the Finis and Colophon of a long and very important chapter in our history. The Queen had out-lived the long list of politicians who, during the sixty-four years of her reign, had helped to shape the destinies of Great Britain. Lord Melbourne, who won the confidence and trained the mind of the young girl who was so early summoned to her high office; Lord Grey, Sir Robert Peel, Lord Russell, Lord Derby, Lord Palmerston, Lord Beaconsfield, Mr. Gladstone, were all gone. Of her other two Prime Ministers, the great Lord Salisbury was yet three years short of reaching the dignity of an Eton jacket when she came to the throne; Lord Rosebery's mother had been one of her bridesmaids.

The early death of the Prince Consort had deprived her of her one intimate adviser, her one trusty friend, and for forty years she remained a lonely figure, widowed, and more than widowed, for her exalted station deprived her of the companionship which humbler people can enjoy. She had few friends, mostly ladies who had been with her in the happier days of her life. Among these, perhaps the chief were the Duchess of Sutherland, Lady Ely, Lady Churchill and Lady Augusta Stanley. These all died before her—her last confidante was Lady Churchill, who predeceased her only

by a few days. Her trusty friends, Sir Charles Phipps, Sir Thomas Biddulph and Sir Charles Grey, were long since dead. Sir Henry Ponsonby, her devoted and brilliant private secretary, who for so many years had served her most faithfully, died in 1895. Two excellent servants she had in Lord Stamfordham and Sir Fleetwood Edwardes, but she would not have been human had she not felt her solitude. Outliving is the curse of old age. Nor was it only among her own personal attendants that the Queen paid the tribute of sorrow which is the penalty of a long life. Two of her sons and one of her daughters predeceased her. The gallant Emperor Frederick, her much loved son-in-law, had died in 1888, her grandson, the Duke of Clarence, in 1892. The Ashanti War led to the death of another son-in-law, Prince Henry of Battenberg, in 1896. These are what may be called unnatural sorrows, though, unfortunately, they are common enough. That we should bury our fathers, though the grief be bitter and the loss irreparable, is in the ordinary course of nature; to bury our sons seems a cruel reversal of all fitness.

Through those long, solitary years the Queen performed the duties of her Queenship with unflagging zeal and devotion, though she remained a mystery, felt but invisible. The people, though they would fain have had more opportunities of seeing her, respected her seclusion, knowing the value of their Sovereign, and proud of the successes of her reign. She came to the throne at a moment when the Crown was anything but popular. George the Fourth had greatly estranged his subjects, and William the Fourth was not the man to raise enthusiasm from the dead. That was reserved for a young Princess who was literally called out of her sleep to enter upon her high position when she was only eighteen years of age—a mere child. She made the people feel the value of a monarchy, and so, in the earthquake of 1848, when other thrones were tottering and falling, hers was as firm as a rock. Such slight disturbances as there were hardly excited alarm, and the Chartist rising, though important, was not an actual danger to the throne.

It was memorable as giving occasion for a curious episode in history, when Prince Louis Napoléon enlisted as special constable and was on duty with my father in the churchyard in Mount Street.

Queen Victoria was indeed the embodiment of the monarchical principle, an inheritance which she bequeathed to her son and grandson, both of whom have raised a glorious edifice upon the foundation which she laid.

When the Queen died the mourning was honest and sincere.

* * * * * * *

The crown which Queen Victoria had brightened by long constancy to duty was now firmly rooted in the instincts of the people. In so far as that was concerned, the new King might be said to have an easier part to play at his accession than she had. In spite of that he had to face an arduous task. In the two successions the positions were reversed. In her case there was no trouble or danger abroad. Her difficulties lay at home. In King Edward's case the difficulties were over the sea. The power of the South African Republic was broken, and that grand, patriotic soldier, Lord Roberts, who laid aside the greatest private sorrow that can break a man's heart in order to do his public duty, had come home to receive at the hands of the Queen the highest reward which it was in her power to bestow. The earldom and the Garter were never more gloriously earned. But it was not until the 31st of May of the following year that peace was signed.

On the Continent of Europe the jealousy of England was virulent, and the Boer War, purposely misrepresented and misunderstood, was used to aggravate the poison of a disease which needed the most patient and delicate treatment. It was with this that King Edward markedly busied himself. It was no easy task—especially in Germany. The Kaiser had been not only a great admirer of his grandmother, but he, as I verily believe, honestly loved her. He came over to England to attend her death-bed. He lost no opportunity afterwards of bearing witness to his respect for her. Towards his uncle, King Edward, he entertained no such feeling. That is a matter of common knowledge. There had been, no doubt, differences—never amounting to quarrels—between them. They were not in sympathy, and it says much for King Edward's power of conciliation that by his endeavour "the rough ways were made smooth." Unfortunately the great rent was only a question of time.

The King's visits to the Continent are treated in no friendly spirit by the "Dictionary of National Biography," which even goes out of its way to belittle the part which he played in public work abroad as at home. Speaking of his visits to Paris, the writer says: "Political principles counted for little in his social intercourse . . a modest estimate was set on his political acumen when in informal talk he travelled beyond safe generalities." But perhaps no word of a serious writer on history, or biography, which is, or should be, history, by whomsoever that word may have been inspired, ever more swiftly received material contradiction than the following: "An irresponsible suggestion at a private party in Paris that the *entente* ought to be converted into a military alliance met with no response." The response is loud enough to-day in the dunes of Flanders, on the Vistula, in the Carpathians, and in the Dardanelles.

When King Edward travelled he was carrying out the practice of the great foreign statesmen who were wont to take their holidays, or at any rate part of them, at some foreign watering-place like Gastein, Marienbad, Carlsbad or Homburg, where the Prime Ministers of the various countries met and exchanged views. That was the habit of the mighty Bismarck himself. Our own statesmen neglected this until the late Lord Salisbury undertook his famous journey through Europe in order to become acquainted and confer with the ministers of foreign Powers. This abstinence on the part of the English leaders undoubtedly placed them at a disadvantage when the great international questions were discussed. Men like Bismarck and Andrassy had travelled over one another's minds, and each knew exactly how best to tackle the other. Our men went to a conference primed with technicalities which are apt to become ineptitudes when the personal factor is excluded.

King Edward relied greatly on that personal factor, and he obtained a more intimate knowledge of the ruling men in France, Germany, Austria and Italy, not to speak of lesser Powers, than was possessed by any other English statesman.

In connection with the charge of want of political acumen and indifference to books upon which so much stress has been laid,

a very eminent French statesman, who knew the King well and had many opportunities of judging him, writes to me as follows:

"Pour juger le feu Roi il faut l'avoir vu de près et l'avoir fréquenté dans les moments difficiles. Alors on pouvait se rendre compte de la force de son caractère et de la justesse de son esprit. J'ai été le témoin le plus attentif de tout ce qu'il a fait pour amener le rapprochement de la France et de l'Angleterre, et de la ténacité qu'il a apportée dans la poursuite d'une politique que certaines personnes trouvaient un peu précipitée. Mais il connaissait mieux la France que personne en Angleterre et il savait ce qu'il pouvait oser. Je lui étais très attaché parceque je savais tout ce qu'il valait—c'était un homme d'état—on n'apprend pas dans les livres à être un homme d'état; on l'est naturellement et rien ne donne à ceux qui ne les possèdent pas les qualités de décision et de perspicacité nécessaires pour entreprendre de grandes choses."

This spontaneous tribute of one great statesman to the merits of another is a sufficient refutation of much that has in ignorance been imputed to King Edward.

That he was immensely popular in France is certain. Frenchmen looked upon him as a true friend, and in society he was said to be "le plus Parisien des Parisiens"; a leading Royalist once said to me, "Tell your King that if ever he is tired of his job in England, we will take him by acclamation." The fact that he was beloved by the more frivolous sets did not prevent his being respected by the serious politicians. It is idle to suppose that men like Gambetta, Clémenceau, Hanotaux, Pichon, Delcassé and others who were wrapt in affairs, sought his society as that of a mere man of pleasure, a mere Royal *boulevardier* such as the Prince of Orange. Like Sir William Harcourt and others of our own leaders on both sides in politics, they formed a higher estimate of his worth than that which unfortunately will be handed down in the "Dictionary."

The German Press, as Sir Sidney Lee himself points out, took a very different view from his of the King's visits to foreign potentates. They were far from thinking him to be the negligible quantity in politics that Sir Sidney Lee describes. Believing him to be an

enemy, they looked upon him as a dangerous one. If he paid a visit to the King of Italy it was a deadly machination to disunite the Triple Alliance. If he met his near relation, the Emperor of Russia, at Reval or Cowes, it was with the view of soldering an *entente* between England, France and Russia, and converting it into an alliance, offensive and defensive, aimed at Germany. In all that the King did there was a sinister motive, a continuous Machiavellian intrigue with one solid object.

The imputation of malevolence was based on fallacy, as Sir Sidney Lee shows, but the attitude of the German Press ought to have taught a great writer that if highly instructed publicists attached such importance to the King's participation in affairs, however false might be the motives ascribed, his own appreciation of it might possibly be open to correction, and could not fail to create a wrong impression upon future students of history.

The relations between the King and the Emperor of Austria were in the highest degree cordial—and no wonder. For the old Emperor, the venerable man whose life had been so cruelly pursued by the Fates, the King, like everybody who had a heart, felt the most profound sympathy, which in his case amounted to affection. The betrayal of 1908, when Baron Ærenthal annexed Bosnia and Herzegovina, making the Treaty of Berlin into "a scrap of paper," and, borrowing a phrase from Kant, justified his action as a "categorical imperative," was a violent shock to King Edward.

It was on the 8th of October that the King received the news at Balmoral, and no one who was there can forget how terribly he was upset. Never did I see him so moved. He had paid the Emperor of Austria a visit at Ischl less than two months before. The meeting had been friendly and affectionate, ending with a hearty "auf baldiges Wiedersehen." Baron Ærenthal had been with the Emperor, Sir Charles Hardinge with King Edward. The two Sovereigns and the two statesmen had discussed the Eastern Question—especially the Balkan difficulties—with the utmost apparent intimacy, and the King left Ischl in the full assurance that there was no cloud on the horizon. Now, without a word of warning, all was changed. The King was indignant, for nobody

knew better than he did the danger of tampering with the provisions of the Treaty of Berlin, and he saw that to make any change in the Turkish provinces was to light a fuse which, sooner or later, was bound to fire a powder magazine. Personally, the King felt that he had been treacherously deceived. His forecast of the danger, which he communicated at the time to me, showed him to be possessed of that prevision which marks the statesman. Every word that he uttered that day has come true.

At the outset of King Edward's reign we heard a good deal of our "splendid isolation." It was a clever catchword of defiance, invented by a supremely brilliant statesman, but it did not help to make matters pleasanter or safer. Germany hated and envied us; France suspected us; Russia looked upon us as the hidden enemy, lurking by night. When the King died all was changed. I am far from saying that the more friendly feelings which prevailed were entirely due to his initiation; but I do say that without the wonderful influence and personal charm which he exerted they would not have existed. He fully recognized his limitations as a Constitutional monarch; it was not for him to start alliances; but he made them possible. There were Ministers before his time; could they have removed obstacles and softened asperities as he did? He knew, moreover, that no Sovereign, no Government, could utter a command like that of the first day of creation: "Let there be peace." He knew that he must work for it, and he did—incessantly. To the world's sorrow another monarch in another country has said, "Let there be war!" and there was war.

The signing of the peace in South Africa on the 31st of May, 1902, came as a fitting Coronation present to the King. The ceremony had been fixed for the 26th of June; but a day or two before that date ugly rumours began to be whispered through the town as to the King's health. He was so anxious that nothing should occur to prevent the Coronation from taking place, which, he felt, must create the greatest disappointment and inconvenience to thousands of people, that he enjoined upon those about him the strictest secrecy as to his condition, and it was not until Sir Francis Laking told him that if he attempted to face the fatigue he might even die in the Abbey, pointing out what a tragedy that

would be, that he was at last persuaded to postpone the Coronation. Even so, mindful, as always, of others, he commanded that the honours which were to be conferred should not be delayed by his illness. The secret of the operation was well kept, for the public and even the King's friends knew nothing of it until the 24th, the day upon which the operation took place.

There was a great flower show of the Horticultural Society at Holland Park that afternoon. The band of the Blues had been engaged. Mr. Godfrey, the bandmaster, came up to me and said that he had not half his men. The troops were confined to barracks—and he had with him only the married men who lived out; and then he told me what had happened. I rushed off and called a hansom (there were no taxis till four or five years later) and drove to Buckingham Palace for news. The account was good so far as it went, but the danger was still acute. It would be difficult to exaggerate the anxiety which was felt all over England, but mercifully the bulletins improved from day to day: the King recovered and the Coronation took place on the 9th of August. It was a great anxiety for all those who loved the King—and who was there in all that vast assembly, or indeed throughout England, that did not love him?—but he bore the strain splendidly and all was well.

The glories of the Coronation have been described by abler pens than mine; with them I dare not compete. Great as Westminster Abbey is, full of immemorial traditions, it can never have looked more splendid than it did on that day when Princes, Peers and Commoners, subjects from lands lying far away across the seas, were all gathered together to acclaim their King. Never before in the history of man had such a world's gathering been brought under one roof. And when we listened to the salvoes of artillery, and remembered that eight thousand miles beneath our feet the booming of the cannon was thundering out the joy of men in the Antipodes who were fellow-subjects with us, we felt the power of which that royal figure on the throne was the symbol.

One touching episode will never be forgotten. When the venerable Archbishop of Canterbury did homage, he was weak

and tired and failed by himself to rise. The King leant forward and, grasping the old man's hand, which had anointed him, bore it to his lips, and helped him to stand upright. It was a kingly act performed with all the grace and dignity of which our Lord the King had the secret. Not even the kiss when he greeted the Prince of Wales with all the tenderness to which the present King testified when he said: "I have lost not only a Father's love but the affectionate and intimate relations of a dear friend and adviser," could create greater emotion than this spontaneous tribute of respect to the brave old prelate, who a few weeks later, a slave to duty, made his last heroic effort in the House of Lords —broke down—and was taken home never to come forth again.

We are wont to talk of the even tenour of life, when no such thing exists. No two days are alike, still less are any two years. The "Ships that pass in the night" are variously freighted. Some—these the rarest—are laden with the bright, precious jewels of happiness; some with a cargo of neutral interest; others are carrying the seeds of sorrow to be sowed broadcast over the world. The death of King Edward was felt far beyond the boundaries of this country or even of this Empire. He had earned for himself an affection and influence such as no British monarch had ever before achieved, and when he died the sorrow was literally the people's sorrow. For some years before his death his health —though this was not generally known—had caused no little anxiety to his doctors. He was subject to violent fits of spasmodic coughing from which it sometimes seemed as if he could scarcely recover. The exertion was terrifying to those who witnessed it, and occasionally he appeared to be choking.

This was the reason of his annual trips to Biarritz or some other place blessed with an atmosphere purer than that of the London which he loved. These journeys, which have been ungenerously attributed to the love of pleasure, were really a matter of necessity; they furnished in a mild degree that oxygen which in its pure state is administered to the dying in order to relieve the pain of breathing—the pain from which he so often suffered.

In the early days of 1910 the King seemed to outsiders to be

much in his usual health; but the doctors were nervous and anxious; they were eager to get him away from London. On the 6th of March he gave a great dinner-party—only men—he was in excellent spirits and after dinner went the round of his guests, as was his wont, and chatted gaily with each of them. As he was leaving the room he stopped for a moment, to talk to me, and spoke with all his natural cheerfulness, like a boy before a holiday, of his journey which was to take place on the morrow.

It was not long before the anxiety felt by his doctors was justified. "Only we," said one of them to me, "know how serious his condition is. If he had been a private individual we should have had him away long ago." He caught cold in Paris and was very unwell when he arrived at Biarritz. The world at large was not told how ill he was, and the secret was well kept from all those who were not behind the scenes, but for a week he seemed to be wrestling with death; that time he conquered, but the victory was ephemeral. On the 27th of April he came home. He was well enough, or imprudent enough, to go to the Opera, which he never willingly missed, for he was devoted to music.

One night I happened to be sitting in a stall near his omnibus box. The King came in and sat down in his usual corner place. I noticed that he was looking very tired and worn. He sat through one act, all alone in the box. Then he got up, and I heard him give a great sigh. He opened the door of the box, lingered for a little in the doorway, with a very sad expression in his face—so unlike himself—took a last look at the house, and then went out. I never saw him again. At the end of the week, on the 30th of April, he went down to Sandringham to superintend some work, and I had been bidden to hold myself in readiness to go with him, as I so often did on those occasions. But when the time came he was feeling ill and out of sorts, and so he only took with him Sir Dighton Probyn and the Equerry-in-Waiting. The cold wind gave the *coup de grâce* and he only came back to London to die.

Ill as he was when he reached Buckingham Palace, he worked with all his accustomed energy, and on the Wednesday, when one of the permanent heads of the Civil Service was with him,

he was seized with one of those terrible choking fits of coughing. When he got better his visitor ventured to remonstrate with him, and begged him to rest, and even go to bed, but he ridiculed the idea and said, "No, I shall not give in—I shall work to the end. Of what use is it to be alive if one cannot work." That was how he fulfilled his declaration to the Privy Council on his accession, that "so long as there was breath in his body he would work for the good and amelioration of his people."

The King loved England. He was a patriot in the highest, I had almost said the divinest sense of the word. Queen Mary Tudor said that when she died the word CALAIS would be found written upon her heart. When King Edward died the word would have been ENGLAND.

This leads me once more to the King's untiring power of work. His method differed entirely from that of Queen Victoria, and this last interview of his with a permanent civil servant well shows how his industry took another shape from hers. As I have already said, the Queen worked entirely at her desk; she was an indefatigable writer and would alter and revise the drafts of her ministers freely—often with great effect—as for instance in the case of Lord Russell's Foreign Office despatches. But I suppose that few sovereigns have been less in personal contact with her ministers, with the single exception of Lord Beaconsfield, than Queen Victoria was after the defeat of Lord Melbourne, who up to that time had been always at her side as a confidential adviser as well as responsible minister. But of the permanent officials she personally made no use. She never sent for them or consulted them, and I much doubt whether she knew the heads even of the Foreign Office or Treasury by sight. The chapter of accidents alone made me an exception to the rule.

King Edward was very different in that respect. His work with his ministers was almost entirely done by discussion in personal interviews; moreover, he knew all the men of mark in the Civil Service as he did those in the Army and Navy, and made good use of their knowledge and experience in affairs. I believe that his was the better way; at any rate, in these days of bewildering rapidity, when telegraphs and telephones are at work

all day and all night, the Oriental aloofness of Queen Victoria's method could not fail to be a hindrance. But apart from that, I am convinced that the King would have been the first to admit that he derived great advantage from the help he received from direct intercourse with the heads of the various departments, while their sovereign's generous recognition could not fail to be a great stimulus to them. His Civil Service dinners were a great compliment.

It is quite false to suppose that King Edward took no interest in home politics. But let us take a concrete case; it is worth while for more than one reason. In Sir Sidney Lee's article there is an allusion to the King's attitude towards Lord Haldane's scheme for a Territorial Army. Now this is what took place. When Lord Haldane—then War Minister—had formulated his proposals, he took them to the King, who studied them diligently with Lord Haldane's explanations, and having with his usual quickness seen the point, came to the conclusion that the scheme should have a fair trial and determined to give it his support. With this view he did what no other man—not even the Prime Minister—could have done: he summoned the Lords Lieutenant of Counties to a meeting at Buckingham Palace to confer with him and Lord Haldane—the Duke of Connaught, himself a distinguished general, being present.

The King made a speech impressing upon his Lieutenants the duty of energetically co-operating with the Secretary of State in launching the new county associations. To use an expression of one who was present, "The King played up magnificently." The Duke of Norfolk replied on behalf of his colleagues, and assured the King in a few admirable words that he might rely upon his Lords Lieutenant to perform their new duties. We see the result to-day. Right nobly have the Territorials justified their existence and the confidence of the King in the great War Minister who was responsible for them. I have been privileged to see a letter from one of the greatest of our Generals at the front. It would be difficult to imagine a finer tribute to Lord Haldane's administration of the War Office. It is now generally acknowledged that but for him and for the measures which he initiated, our position at

the beginning of the war would have been very different from what it was. He enabled us to send out a force, which if still insufficient to break the German legions, was yet worthy of England. The rest will follow. I hold no brief for Lord Haldane, nor should I be guilty of the impertinence of attempting any estimate of his work. He is too great a man and can afford to be judged by results. What I seek to show is the patient industry and vigilant care with which the King mastered a complicated scheme at a moment when there was no stimulus such as the existence, or even the near probability, of a state of war to excite the imagination.

In the same way he supported his trusted friend, Lord Fisher, in regard to the Navy; and here again we see to-day what has come of his wise adoption of a new departure. Would that great Lord of the Sea any more than Lord Haldane accuse the King of lending a languid or half-hearted attention to his proposals?

It is a difficult matter for anyone who knew King Edward to write an appreciation of him. The danger of lapsing into indiscretion is obvious. At the same time it is equally clear that only those who did know him intimately can give a just estimate of his character, and that to leave his portrait to be painted by those who did not know him, however gifted they may be, must inevitably lead to misconceptions and misrepresentations, and that is still more dangerous. The fact is that King Edward had as many sides to his character as a brilliant has facets. The man who knew him not, sees one or more of those facets and rushes off at a tangent, drawing the whole character from such an imperfect view of him. Nothing could be more unfair, nothing more unlucky in the case of a sovereign who must live in history.

It is to be hoped that some day a life of the King may be written in which more stress may be laid upon the noble features of his nature, and not such exaggerated weight given to those transient foibles which mark the first escape of an ardent youth from pedagogic thraldom. He had one characteristic for which we may go back to the simile of the brilliant. No diamond could be more purely clear and honest than King Edward, and it was that pellucid truthfulness which made him so powerful in his relations with foreign sovereigns and statesmen; they knew that when they were dealing

with him they had to do with a King as honest as Nathanael, a man in whom was no guile.

There is a sentence in the notice of the King in the "Dictionary of National Biography" which calls for some observation. In connection with Mr. Asquith's famous visit to Biarritz to kiss hands on becoming Prime Minister, we are told that "the King's health was held to justify the breach of etiquette. But the episode brought into strong relief the King's aloofness from the working of politics, and a certain disinclination hastily to adapt his private plans to political emergencies." That, I affirm, gives a most unfair idea of the King's attitude to his duties. I have given the reasons, not generally understood, which occasioned his visits to Biarritz. People saw a strongly built, burly man and they were slow to recognize in him an invalid whose days were numbered. As regards the last part of my quotation, I dare assert that it is entirely unjust. For forty years—from 1861 to 1901—as Prince of Wales, he, then a very young man, constantly had to sacrifice his own inclinations for the performance of duties the dullness of which was often of the most wearisome character. Those duties were carried out with a geniality which made men believe that he was really enjoying himself, and for that they loved him.

He was keen on sport, was gay and happy in amusement, delighted in the theatre and the Opera, and in society, but never was this side of his character allowed to hinder duty. "It is all so interesting," was a speech of his which I have quoted once before, in regard to the political work that became his portion as King, and which we are asked to believe that he neglected.

King Edward's wonderful courage and coolness were notorious. It never seemed to occur to him that there could be such a thing as danger, or, if it did exist, that it was worthy of his notice. When Blondin offered to carry him across Niagara on his tight-rope the Prince of Wales, as he then was, would have accepted the venture at once, and was keen to go. But happily, though he could not be afraid for himself, there were others who could be afraid for him, and he was prevented. When a great chemist told him that he might safely put his hand into a caldron containing I know not what seething metal, he did so at once without hesitation or flinching.

So it was when he was face to face with the murderer and his pistol at Brussels. His nerve was perfect. We all remember the quiet courage with which he cleared decks for action, and made ready for the operation which in 1902 might easily have cost him his life. He was not afraid of the chance of death then, nor did he show any sign of fear when the certainty came eight years later. On the morning of that fatal 6th of May, 1910, he was calm and collected. He knew that he was dying, but he could face death as cheerfully as he always had faced life.

The end was lightning-swift, but so great was his energy that he had arranged to see a private friend that morning. He had desired Sir Ernest Cassel to go and visit him at eleven o'clock. Sir Ernest found the King dressed and sitting in his chair, from which he rose to greet and shake hands with his friend. "I knew that you would not fail me," he said. They remained talking for a while, but soon it was evident that the sufferer's strength was waning. Sadly Sir Ernest took his leave, feeling that it was for the last time. I was at Stratford-on-Avon, and received a telegram saying that he could hardly live through the night. The few sacred hours that followed were watched over by the tender care of those nearest and dearest to him—the loving wife and children who never left him till the end. In the afternoon he was undressed and laid in his bed; the light faded and he became unconscious. The Archbishop of Canterbury came and joined in the prayers by the bedside. A little before midnight the brave heart had ceased to beat.

When the black news came a deadly pall fell over the country, and there were many men—some great, some small—who felt that life could never again be quite the same for them. It seemed impossible. To the last his energy was so vivid, the lamp of life's joy burned so brightly in him, that men could not believe that the grey mystery had extinguished that sunny nature. But it was all too true: the ringing voice was silenced for ever: the King was dead.

* * * * * * *

Within the space of ten years Great Britain had lost two sovereigns. Both were sincerely mourned by their subjects. But

there are in grief qualities which differ. The sorrow which followed Queen Victoria to the grave was a tribute to a great and noble personality; it was the recognition of the value of long years of assiduous labour, of a lonely life consecrated to the good of her country; personally to the vast majority of her people she was unknown. For forty years she had lived, as the saying is in the East, "behind the curtain," and though her influence was felt, she herself was shrouded in something of awe—she was as invisible as Providence. King Edward, on the contrary, had been for half a century a most familiar figure in every part of the kingdom. Not hundreds, but thousands of men could claim that they had shaken hands with him, and could repeat some kindly word to which his genial manner had given emphasis and value. Every one of those myriads felt as though he had lost a personal friend—as if he in his humble self was the poorer.

For the monarchy the Queen had won respect and admiration, and a feeling that

> God's in his heaven,
> All's right with the world.

Then came King Edward, and he, without by one jot lessening the devotion which the great Queen had called up, added to her diadem the priceless pearls of personal love and affection. That was the crown of his work, and since that was won who shall say that his life was lived in vain? King George has not been long upon the Throne; but he too has played a part in which we older folk see an assurance that he will hand down to his successors untarnished and undimmed the lustre of the glory of which he is the heir.

CHAPTER IX

MY BROTHER. MUSIC AND THE DRAMA

MY vagabond pen has strayed far from the year 1863; I must retrace my steps. In the month of April of that year my eldest brother, Percy, was married to the brilliant daughter of Lord Egerton of Tatton. It was the happiest of marriages, which was without a cloud until his too early death in 1883. He was a very clever man, but terribly hampered by bad health. He was originally in the Army, having entered the 43rd Regiment, from which he exchanged into the 52nd and afterwards into the Scots Guards. But he was so crippled with rheumatic gout that he had to leave the Army, and after a while entered the Diplomatic Service, in which he served at Berlin, Brussels, Frankfort and Copenhagen. He was one of the few, the very few men who really mastered the intricacies of the Schleswig-Holstein question. Some people say that there were only two—Bismarck and his intimate enemy, the late Sir Robert Morier. He remained for several years an attaché, and then read for the Bar, got called, and entered with zeal into politics. He was not successful in gaining a seat in Parliament, which was a great pity, for he was an exceptionally effective speaker. However, he was able to render good service to the Conservative party in other ways.

He had no pretensions to scholarship, but he had the instinct of good nervous English, which, combined with a sound knowledge of law and of affairs, made him an excellent writer of pamphlets, leading articles, and political skits. To be a regular contributor to the *Owl*, which Laurence Oliphant edited, was a feather in any man's cap, and he was one of the seven original signatories

of the Primrose League. It is pretty certain that had he lived he would have made his mark in the political world. *Dîs aliter visum est*—he died at the moment when life seemed to be dangling its choicest prizes before him.

* * * * * * *

In 1858, immediately after leaving Oxford, I was pressed into the Amateur Musical Society by Henry Leslie, who was then its conductor, and made to play first cornet. In that year was held the first rehearsal for the Handel Festival at the Crystal Palace. The "Dictionary of National Biography" (Article Costa) gives the date as 1857, which is wrong. The object was to test the capabilities of the place for a vast orchestra and chorus. Our Society was invited to join the band, and so it came to pass that I played at the first cornet's desk at the rehearsal in 1858, and afterwards at the Festivals of 1859, 1862, and at the opening of the great Exhibition in London in the latter year. Costa, afterwards Sir Michael, conducted.

The people who witnessed the failure of the young Neapolitan baritone at Birmingham in 1829 could have had no suspicion that they were rejecting a man who was destined to become a dominant influence in the music of this country. Costa's voice was weak and unattractive, but he had already been deeply schooled in the science of his art by Zingarelli, and had made some mark as a composer. It was Clementi who recognized his true vocation as conductor: if the story be true that after his first appearance as leader, the members of the band, who were not inclined to receive him with favour, presented him with a box of razors as a way of twitting him with his youth, there were good judges who at once formed the highest opinion of his power.

The great Duke of Wellington,* who was devoted to music, and never, if he could help it, missed the "Ancient Concerts" or the opera, was in a box with my father the first time that he saw Costa conduct. He was immensely struck by the young conductor's dominant personality, and turning round to my father said, "That

* In his youth he worked hard at the violin, and it is said with success.

young man could have commanded an army." He recognized a magnetic influence which no one who ever played under him failed to feel. His sway over his orchestra was phenomenal. He was the incarnation of masterful will-power. When I first knew him in about the year 1850 he was forty years of age. A sturdy, powerfully-built man of about the middle height—curly, rather fair hair—whiskers meeting under his chin; slightly pitted with the smallpox; a pale complexion. But what always struck me most about him was the massive lower jaw, that meant so much. I knew him well till his death in 1884, or rather till his terrible illness in 1883—paralysis, which deprived him of the power of speech. The last time I saw him in Pall Mall he could only point with his finger to his tongue; he shook his head sadly, his eyes filled with tears, he pressed my hand warmly in a parting which we both knew must be the last.

I remember the occasion when after we had rehearsed Meyerbeer's opening music for the Exhibition of 1862, the composer bowed, thanked the band, and hailed Costa as the greatest conductor of the world. Richter is the only conductor that I have seen who could be compared with him. Leaving on one side the many faults that have been found with Costa as a musician—chiefly for tampering with scores—I believe no one could excel him in the art of conveying his intentions to a great army of performers. When he stepped into the orchestra, firmly grasped his bâton —not holding it with ladylike daintiness between two fingers as do so many emasculate conductors of to-day—he would give two curious side to side movements with his head, a little trick which never failed, and then the beating of the first bar, firm and decided, made itself felt throughout band and audience, and one realized the appreciation of the great Duke.

It would hardly be thought likely that the rehearsals of a Handel Festival would lead to comic incidents—but they did to not a few. One was at the rehearsal for the miscellaneous day. We were ready for "See the Conquering Hero Comes." The chorus was to be heralded by brass instruments alone. Costa lifted his bâton and called out, "Now, Brass! One bar for nothing!" Down came the stick and in the dead silence of "one bar for

nothing," a solitary little tenor voice piped out "See the Conquering——" He got no further, Costa tapped his desk, folded the bâton under his arm and roared out, "ARE YOU BRASS?" There was a roar of laughter. Poor little tenor! He must have wished that the Palace might collapse and he sink unnoticed in the ruins.

Talking of that day, who that heard it could ever forget the tragic pathos of Sims Reeves's singing of "Waft her, Angels"? That and his thrilling declamation of the recitative at the beginning of the Messiah, "Comfort ye my people," are among the most haunting memories of my musical days.

It was a time of great singers. Amongst our own folk Clara Novello, Miss Dolby, and Santley with Sims Reeves made a great quartet; for the rendering of oratorios there could hardly be a finer. Amongst the foreign artists, Grisi and Mario, Lablache, Ronconi, Graziani, Titiens, Alboni, Giuglini, Patti, Trebelli, are names that will live.

With Mario and Grisi I was very intimate, they had been old friends of my father's; indeed Mario and he had sung together when Mario was an amateur and came to London as Conte di Candia, a handsome young Sardinian officer. There were concerts at Bridgewater House at which Lady Sandwich was the soprano, Miss Gent, a beautiful Irish lady, the contralto, Mario tenor, and my father the baritone. When Mario made his *début* in Paris, my father travelled all the way from Frankfort, posting, to applaud him. For many years, till I went out to China, I used to go almost every Sunday during the summer to Mario's villa to spend the afternoon in the garden, often remaining to dinner. They kept open house on Sunday, and I fancy never knew beforehand how many guests they would have—ten? twelve? twenty? All were made welcome. Madame Grisi at the head of the table, smiling and beautiful, though no longer young, with her eyes beaming sweetness, was the picture of happy content. She did not talk much, but she had just one little kind word for everybody, and a motherly tenderness which seemed to enfold the whole world upon which those glorious eyes were looking.

Mario was an altogether delightful companion. He was an

MARIO.

By Lord Leighton, P.R.A.

artist to his finger-tips. He was no mean sculptor, a learned collector of books and manuscripts, a scholar full of appreciation of all that was beautiful and refined, Many years after the time of which I am writing, when he came to England for the last time, a little before his death, he telegraphed to me to say he was in London. I was in the country and came up at once. He came to my house and we had a long talk over old times. I showed him some first states of engravings by William Faithorne, the elder. To my amazement he knew all about them. "Ah! mon cher," said he in explanation, "J'ai eu toutes les folies."

In the days of his opulence his charity and generosity knew no bounds. Many of his compatriots lived upon him. One day I was walking with him in his garden at Fulham, when up came a caricature of a man, as tall and lean as a church tower, with a hat that reached the skies, dressed in a long snuff-coloured coat falling to his heels, a grizzled beard, and a cascade of grey hair over his shoulders; a figure out of Struwel Peter. He made a low sweeping bow as if he meant to cut the turf with his hat. "Signor Mario!" another obeisance, hand on heart, and once more the steeple hat shaved the grass. "Ah! Dottor Beggé, what have you there?" "Signor Mario, I hold here a manuscript"—producing a roll from under his arm—"but a manuscript! such a manuscript!" and he blew a kiss into the air. "Well! What do you want for it?'" asked Mario. "For you, Signor Mario, a mere nothing, only twenty pounds sterling." Mario looked at it, bought it, and the long Doctor, bowing even lower than before, stalked off happy. Mario turned round to me and said, "Ça ne vaut pas vingt sous! Mais, ce pauvre Beggé, il faut bien qu'il vive."

Another Sunday an obviously very impecunious Italian came up and told a piteous story of misery at home. Mario did not hesitate a moment; he told the man to go to his room, open a drawer in his writing-table where he would find some notes and gold, and take what he wanted. He was a grand, large-hearted, generous creature; one of the most lovable of men.

In his later days Mario used to be subject to sudden flushing and slight giddiness—out of this the jealousy and ill-nature of

rivals got up the myth that he drank. He was well aware of this and made fun of it. At dinner one evening there was some Château Lafitte of '48 on the table; Mario poured out a quarter of a tumbler of this and filled it up with water. I told him that it was an act of vandalism to drown so rare a wine. He held up the glass laughing and said, "Mon cher, c'est avec cela que je me suis fait une réputation d'ivrogne." Sometimes after dinner a valse would be played and Mario would call out, "Chi vuol ballare con Papa?" and he would dance with his children, then little girls, like a boy in his teens. They adored him and their mother, who looked on radiant.

One met many famous people in that villa. There it was that I last saw the Countess Castiglione—still beautiful, though, dreading as it was said that her beauty might fade, she had already retired from the world before her charms should begin to wane. The first time I met her was at an afternoon party at Holland House, a dream of loveliness acknowledged by everybody; not a fault to be found from the crown of her head to the tips of her feet, and what arms and hands! Then she was in her pride of queendom, radiant, attracting all eyes. Now she was dressed in black, thickly veiled, and speaking only to Mario and Grisi. But disguise herself as she might, she could not altogether hide her transcendent charms.

Whether speaking or singing, I have never heard such a voice as Mario's. It was pure music. The best testimony to its quality came to me secondhand from Richard Wagner. I was talking with Siegfried Wagner about voices, and I said that without a doubt the finest tenor that I had ever known was Mario. "Yes," said Siegfried, "my father always said the same thing." This witness is the more valuable as no one could accuse Wagner of any predilection for the Italian school of song.

Giuglini, the tenor of the rival house where Titiens reigned supreme, used to be compared with Mario; but in my judgment this was absurd. Giuglini's voice, lovely as it was, had a slight defect of "throatiness," whereas Mario's voice came pure and clear from the chest. On the stage there was absolutely no comparison between the two men. Mario's great beauty and his

marvellous power of acting, combined with an irresistible personal charm, made him unique. It would be difficult to imagine anything more thrilling than the tragedy of the two great duets with Grisi in the *Huguenots* and the *Favorita*.

Older people were wont to say that when he first appeared on the stage he was a "stick," and that it was Grisi who taught him and inspired him with the fire of her own genius. If that was so, she found an apt pupil. She was certainly an incomparable actress, but the talent must have been latent in him too, even though the credit of having called it forth may belong to her.

In his last years, when he had retired from the stage, had lost his fortune, and was custode of a museum, Queen Margherita was extremely anxious to hear him sing, and commissioned Edoardo Vera, her music master, to try and get him to do so. After some difficulty Vera, who told me the story, succeeded, and transposed one or two of his old songs for him so that he was really singing as a baritone. So managed, Vera told me that the voice was as velvety and beautiful as ever. The Queen was delighted, and the dear old Mario, white-haired and white-bearded, charmed with his reception. I can well believe in the unimpaired beauty of so much of the singing voice as remained, for when last I saw him in 1879, his speaking voice was still instinct with the same music that I remembered when in the opening of the *Barbiere* he used to call out to Figaro behind the scenes. He died on the 11th of December, 1883.

During the last few years of her life, Grisi's voice began to show signs of wear and tear. It was generally as full and sonorous as ever, and the "bel canto" was glorious. But now and then the notes would fail her, and sometimes it made one nervous to listen to her. Vera, always witty and not seldom ill-natured, once answered when someone said, "La Grisi a toujours de bien beaux moments." "Oui, mais en revanche elle a des fichus quarts d'heure." That was exaggeration born of jealousy, for Vera had a sister Sophie, whom he adored, and who always had to sing Adalgisa when he would fain have had her take Grisi's place as Norma.

Of one musical recollection I am very proud. Grisi, in 1859,

chose me to play the cornet obbligato for her in a Romance by Vera, "Cari fior ch'io stessa colsi," and it ended with a double cadence for the voice and the obbligato instrument. The second time that I accompanied her was at a concert at Dudley House given for the benefit of a poor Italian baritone, Ciabatta, who was dying of consumption. He, poor fellow, had little voice for the opera, but was an excellent singing master. His misfortune was that he was one of the handsomest men that could be seen, a perfect Apollo, and so when he took the best recommendations, he was rejected as dangerous. "Toujours la même histoire," he said piteously once, after a barren morning's lesson-hunting, "les mamans ne veulent pas de moi! Elles disent toutes que je suis trop beau."

Of course, because Mario had a villa at Fulham, Giuglini, as representing the rival house, must have one also. His villa had a long strip of garden with a sundial at the bottom of it. Here on Sundays he would invite his friends, and when they were gathered together he would cover the sundial with breadcrumbs, attracting sparrows, tits, blackbirds and thrushes. As soon as there was a sufficient congregation of these poor innocents, he, standing in the verandah, would send for a gun and blaze away at them, exclaiming to his admiring guests, "Voyez-vous, j'adore la chasse!" What a sportsman! Of his success and charm as a singer there can be no doubt; that he did not please me better was probably my own fault. His end was a sad one. He lost his reason and died miserably in an asylum, singing, as I have been told, to the last, spending his lovely voice in the solitude of a madman's cell.

Jenny Lind I only heard after she had left the stage. Her operatic career was a short one: so far as London was concerned it only lasted two years. Her first appearance was in 1847, her last in 1849, when she was only twenty-nine years old. She continued to sing in concerts and oratorios and made a very successful tour in America, but the theatre knew her no more.

I can well remember how all London went mad over her in the *Figlia del Reggimento*, when she reached the zenith of her fame. In later years, when she was a woman of about forty, I used to

meet her and her husband at the house of a friend. She was a tallish, stately, typical Swedish woman, with a wealth of fair hair, no special beauty of feature, but an expression and above all a smile that were of angelic goodness. The voice was still crystal-clear, true and sweet; even the highest notes—and heaven knows what altitudes she reached!—were as soft and caressing as those of the middle register.

In my friend's little drawing-room, with perhaps half a dozen people present, all sympathetic, Goldsmid would sit down at the piano, and she would pour out her soul, like the "Swedish Nightingale" that she was, in liquid music, shedding around her a happiness which she herself surely felt. Those little modest dinners were feasts indeed.

Later on in these sketches I hope to have a good deal to say about Thomas Carlyle, but one conversation that I had with him seems to fit in so well here that I feel inclined to take it out of its turn. It is strange that he, who could so cruelly scourge the opera as he did in the "Keepsake" for 1852,* should have spoken, with all the rugged enthusiasm that was in him, both of Jenny Lind and Grisi.

I forget how the subject cropped up, but he went off at score, contrasting the two: "The burning, passionate nature of the fiery Southern woman with the calm, cold temperament of the Northern singer"—those were his very words. Of the two I think that, Scot though he was, the fire of the South appealed to him more than the snows of the North. He preached on for several minutes, giving due meed of praise to both the great singers, but always with a tilt of the scale in favour of Grisi.

Then from the opera he passed on to the stage, and there he recognized one figure above all others. He told me how he had seen Talma act in Paris—how great he was—how far ahead of all other actors. What appealed to him strongly was the statuesque side of the famous player's genius, how completely he looked the part he was acting, especially in the old classical tragedies. "That man could so drape himself in a toga that you just felt that you had one of the ancient Romans before you." When Carlyle spoke

* "Miscellaneous Writings," Vol. VII. p. 123.

it was with the fire that he admired in "the Southern woman." Ecclefechan could vie with Palermo. The lava of his volcanic talk swept all before it. I should have liked to have got him to speak of former lights of the English stage—the Kembles, the elder Kean and others. But it was of no use trying to stop him when once he had started. As easily might you hold the waters of Lodore with a butterfly-net. It was Jenny Lind, Grisi, Talma—nothing else.

There were some great actors in my young days. The infectious high spirits of the younger Charles Mathews, the solemn fun of Buckstone, Keeley, Toole and Paul Bedford at the Adelphi (the Paul-y-Tooly-technic, as some wag called it), Wigan and Leigh Murray, Benjamin Webster and many others were grand assets in the gaiety of the nation. It is something to have seen Charles Mathews in *London Assurance,* Wigan with his perfect French, in *The First Night* (*Le Père de la Débutante*), Keeley and Leigh Murray in *The Camp at Chobham.* What perfection of acting! In light comedy and farce the English stage has always been richly endowed. Of tragedy perhaps the less said the better.

In the early fifties Macready, Phelps and Charles Kean were supposed to be the shining lights among the tragedians—Macready, indeed, soon about to pass into a tradition.* To me they gave no pleasure. They seemed to rant and roar and mouth, tearing to tatters Othello, Shylock, Hamlet, Macbeth, King Lear. Their methods were purely academic, mechanical and utterly unnatural. There was plenty of elocution, plenty of declamation—nothing spontaneous, nothing humanly possible; everything taught, nothing felt; of true emotion, begetting emotion in others, not a trace.

I once, in 1856, saw *Othello* played in a barn at Killarney; the Moor was rather drunk, but he was as academic as the great professors; between him and them there was small difference. It was a question of degree. But here am I daring to criticize when I do not even know the jargon of the trade. What is this that is come unto the son of Kish? Is Saul also among the critics?

* He appeared on the stage for the last time in *Macbeth* at Drury Lane in February, 1851. But I heard him read long after that.

Be it my right to speak or not, I shall maintain that Robson, the meteoric man who for so short a time was a blazing light in the theatrical firmament, was the greatest actor that I ever saw on any stage at home or abroad. Upon him the mantle of Garrick had fallen, for there was no branch of his art that came amiss to him. He made his reputation in grotesque farces such as *The Wandering Minstrel* and *Boots at the "Swan,"* in which he showed the town masterpieces of eccentric character study; in burlesque he had no rival; and now and then, as in *The Yellow Dwarf*, he would burst into a fury of passionate acting without any suspicion of rant, that sent cold thrills through the house, making men feel what he would have been capable of achieving in tragedy.

But he was small, puny and weak, and probably his frame would hardly have carried him through one of the grand heroic parts. Where he was at his best and greatest was in such tender, appealing plays as *The Porter's Knot.* Here was the real spirit of tragedy, and here he differed from the schoolmen of whom I have spoken, just as the pathos of a story of misery and woe, told simply and plainly from heart to heart by the sufferer himself, differs from the artificial emotion cooked up for a jury by a lawyer. He could draw tears from the stoniest. Unhappily the feeble body was soon worn out; his arduous work exhausted him; stimulants kept him up to the mark for a time, but they, too, exacted their penalty. His London successes lasted but some eight years, for he retired from the stage in 1862, and two years later he died, being not much more than forty years old.

When Dion Boucicault brought out *The Colleen Bawn* with his beautiful wife as the Colleen, his Miles na Coppaleen fairly took the town by storm. The devil-may-care Irish joyousness which he threw into the part was irresistible, and carried actors and audience with it from his first entrance to the end. But there was one part of his which was even more striking. When he played *The Vampire,* the performance was so horrifying, so ghastly in its realism, that, if I remember right, it was soon withdrawn on that account. The public could not stand it, and it was not brought out again. It was a haunting performance.

First nights in the Victorian days were not the fashionable

gatherings that they now are. People took no more notice of them than they did of ordinary performances. That accounted for my being present, quite by accident, at the first night of *The Bells* on the 25th of November, 1871. The sensation which Irving created in it was sudden and startling. It was a magnificent success, and Irving's fame was made. But what I thought even better was his performance of Jingle in *Pickwick*, by which the famous play was preceded. He was Jingle to the life. The impudent, lean, hungry, out-at-elbows stroller and swindler was a very picture of bohemian destitution. Irving's many successes, his shortcomings and his mannerisms are of too recent date to need dwelling upon. Whether he was a great tragedian or not has been much debated; but I never heard two opinions as to his powers in comedy; his Jingle, his Jeremy Diddler and his Doricourt in *The Belle's Stratagem* were probably as perfect comedy as could be seen. Personally he was one of the most charming of men, and he made many fast friends.

I was present at a small party of men which he once gave after the play at the Lyceum. King Edward, then Prince of Wales, and many of the foremost men of the day had accepted his invitation. Toole was there, full of fun, and Irving recited the scene with the waiter in "David Copperfield." He just stood leaning against the chimney-piece and told the story. But how he told it! That was an inimitable performance. The party did not break up until long after cock-crow. I drove away with Russell Lowell, the American Minister, in a belated, or rather be-earlied, hansom cab; it was summer time and broad daylight, and we two elderly gentlemen felt very dissipated and rather ashamed of being seen, but we both agreed that it would have been difficult to have a more agreeable gathering or a more genial host. The verdict of Lowell, wit, poet, diplomatist, man of letters and man of charm, was conclusive.

Of great actors England has always been prolific. I have left out many of those who were stars in the fifties and sixties. I have, for instance, said nothing of my friend Sir Squire Bancroft, whose memory must live if only for the noble use to which, for many years, he has devoted his great talents.

In great actresses, for some mysterious reason, we have not been so rich. When men talk of women who have been distinguished in tragedy, they still go back to the fame of Mrs. Siddons. Miss O'Neill is now forgotten. As Lady Becher I used constantly to meet her at the house of old Lady Essex (the famous Miss Stevens), who used to gather round her, together with all that was smartest in society, the fine flower of the world of art—almost all the great musicians whom I have mentioned above, Leighton, Landseer, Marochetti, Chorley, Planché and a host of celebrities. Lady Becher as an old lady, cold, stiff and alarming, certainly did not give one the idea of an actress who could so picture sorrow and agony as to create emotion. But of English tragic actresses whom I myself have seen I can recall but two—Adelaide Neilson and Ellen Terry. I wish we could claim the beautiful Mary Anderson, who *vera incessu patuit Dea*—but she, alas! is an American, though for the joy of Gloucestershire and Worcestershire she has made her home at Broadway. Adelaide Neilson worked her way to fame from beginnings of the poorest and the most squalid; she was an exemplification of the Japanese proverb "The lotus flower springs from the mud." Here again was a meteor, for she died in Paris when only thirty-two years old; but she had lived long enough to win admiration by her beauty and great talent. Her lovable qualities appealed to her friends, and her kindness of heart endeared her to her brother and sister players. She was a born actress, and was endowed with that greatest of all gifts for a tragedian—the gift so conspicuous in Sarah Bernhardt—a speaking voice soft and tender, full of musical pathos and emotion, a voice which would of itself have aroused sympathy had she been less winsome in other ways than she was. But in truth she was a most attractive woman, beautiful to look at and a joy to listen to. Her early death left a void in the English stage.

Of Ellen Terry I need not speak. All men know what she is, and none deny her sovereignty. Besides, I am dealing only with the past. Will the future bring anything quite so charming?

Fifty or sixty years ago the palm went to the elder actresses. Mrs. Sterling as Peg Woffington in Tom Taylor and Charles Reade's *Masks and Faces*, playing up to Benjamin Webster's Triplet, was

one of the most extraordinary pieces of acting that I ever saw; and when she appeared as the Nurse in *Romeo and Juliet* one could only mourn over the cruelty of time, feeling of how delightful a Juliet the years had robbed us. Mrs. Wigan, acting with her husband as Mrs. Sternhold in *Still Waters run Deep*, was memorably good, and when in *The Bengal Tiger*, in order to win the heart of the old Nabob (again Alfred Wigan as the tiger), she tried to smoke a hookah, her agonies were excruciatingly funny. Mrs. Keeley, too, was a tower of strength to any company. Her Jack Sheppard lives in my memory, as indeed do many of her parts, as a most finished dramatic picture—the prison scene absolutely harrowing. Like Robson and Garrick, she could be tragic or comic at will. In our young actresses, *ingénues*, we were not so fortunate as the play-goers of the present day.

But we did possess one star, at any rate, of the first magnitude. In 1862, when Miss Kate Terry appeared in *The Duke's Motto* with Fechter,* whose triumphs at Paris with Madame Doche in the creation of the *Dame aux Camélias* were world-famous, all London, from Charles Dickens downwards, vowed that such romantic acting had never been seen and could never be beaten. The fascination of the love scenes was bewildering. There was nothing theatrical about them. They were the very poetry of emotion. When she left the stage after a very short and brilliant career to become the gracious châtelaine of Moray Lodge, that small portion of the world which calls itself Society was the gainer, but to the world at large it was a heavy loss.

Miss Madge Robertson, now Mrs. Kendal, was both a lovely girl and a most fascinating actress. She it was, unless my memory fails me, who with her husband created Gilbert's *Pygmalion and Galatea*, which was also one of Miss Mary Anderson's great parts. Gilbert was lucky in getting two such ladies to interpret him.

A list is mostly only interesting to those who appear in it, and this is mere list-making; no more than an attempt to register

* A most picturesque and splendid actor. A Frenchman to all intents and purposes, speaking English with a strong French accent. There was a story that he was born in England, but that is doubtful. He died in America in 1879. (See "Dictionary of National Biography.")

for the present generation the names of those who delighted their grandfathers—and most of those who are in it have *dis*appeared. But even from a list it is impossible to omit the name of Lady Bancroft. To all who saw her she will always remain a charming memory of the days when all the youth of London was in love with Miss Marie Wilton—across the footlights. Her sparkling gaiety, her delicious little impertinencies, her irresistible spirits, her entirely fascinating personality, were so full of life that the doctors might have prescribed a stall at the Strand Theatre for their run-down patients, when she was playing Pippo in *The Maid and the Magpie*, or one of her other burlesque parts. Then came the days of the Prince of Wales's Theatre and Tom Robertson's famous plays, *Society*, *Caste*, *Ours*, *School*—and here again Miss Marie Wilton proved her great powers in a new line. Acting more subtle and more refined has perhaps never been seen. Her troupe, moreover, was famous for the all-round excellence with which the pieces were given; it used to be a reproach to the English stage that if there were a first-rate star in the company, the rest of the characters were more or less left to chance, and people used to compare the slovenliness of our theatres with the exquisitely finished detail of Paris. At the Prince of Wales's Theatre, under the Bancroft management, the finish given to the smallest parts was as careful and fastidious as that which marked the play of the chief actors. The result was a harmonious whole, setting an example which has wrought the best influence on our stage. The old slip-shod performances which I can remember would now no longer be tolerated, and for their disappearance much gratitude is owing to the Bancrofts. *Caste* was, perhaps, their masterpiece. Lady Bancroft's Polly Eccles, with her husband as Captain Hawtree, and Sir John Hare as Eccles, made the piece a landmark in the history of the English drama.

Of the gynæceum of the English stage I have no more to say. It would be pleasing for a veteran play-goer like myself to pay his tribute to the charm of such delightful actresses as Miss Irene Vanbrugh, Miss Marie Tempest, Miss Gladys Cooper and others. Their praises must be left to be sung by their own contemporaries, of whom I only wish that I were one.

CHAPTER X

RUSSIA

ONE day in the month of November, 1863, I agreed to make an exchange for six months with Mr. Locock, the second secretary of Embassy at St. Petersburg—it would be an anachronism to speak of "Petrograd"—and by the end of the month I was off.

November 30th.—St. Petersburg at last! To anyone who loves beautiful scenery there could hardly be a duller, gloomier journey than that across the eternal stretches of moor and marsh, broken up by forests of sad-looking, stunted birch and fir trees. No human habitation to be seen, no mankind, save at the railway stations a few peasants, their limbs swathed in bandages of sackcloth, with bags of the same all over; dirty, unkempt, poverty-stricken, and hungry as their fellow-subjects the wolves. Soldiers everywhere, for the Polish insurrection was at its height, and even our train had a military guard. Most of my fellow passengers carried revolvers, picturesque but unprofitable furniture, giving a slight flavour of adventurousness to the journey, though there was really no cause for alarm, no reason to expect the least little excitement in the way of danger. There were too many soldiers about for that. Thirteen trains full of them passed into Lithuania the day before I was there, adding to our impatience by delaying us for an hour and a half when we were longing with our whole souls to reach our goal.

And yet, socially, it was a pleasant journey enough. I travelled with William Harbord, Lord Suffield's brother, whose first appearance it was as a Queen's Messenger. On board the Calais boat

was the Crown Prince of Denmark, going home from work at Oxford, who was most kind to us, and invited us to travel in his carriage and to dine with him at Cologne. We parted from him at Hanover when he branched off for Denmark. We were very sorry to say good-bye, for he was most gracious and friendly. At Berlin I had a few hours between trains, which I spent with that grand old diplomatist Sir Andrew Buchanan, who was our Ambassador, a great gentleman of the old school, and in the evening I dined with him before starting for Russia. Here again I was in luck, for in the train I found Prince Alexis Dolgorouky and at Kowno there were added to us General Bechelemicheff and his wife. He was returning from a command in Poland, and the first intimation that we had of his presence at the station was an awful serenade of songs and brass instruments executed by the band of one of his regiments. So we had quite a merry party and the time passed cheerfully enough inside the carriage. Outside the prospect was dismal to a degree, and we shut our eyes to it. The winter's snow had not yet arrived, and there was nothing but slosh and mud and misery. However:

> "Be the day weary or be the day long,
> At length it ringeth to evensong."

What a crowd it was at the station! Railway officials, Custom House officers, police, hotel touts, droschky drivers, indescribables of all sorts; swearing, chaffing, abusing, howling; each one straining his own lungs and the hearers' ears as nearly to bursting point as possible, until, official patience being exhausted, a police officer wielding a stout cudgel, with a few blows indiscriminately administered about the heads of the rabble, sent them all flying in various directions, and at last the Embassy servant who had been sent to meet me was able to pilot me to a carriage and I once more tasted freedom.

It was a lovely moonlit night, close upon ten o'clock, and the town looked perfectly beautiful. The canals and palaces and streets ablaze with light, the river reflecting a thousand lamps. The domes and spires of the churches, gilt and silvered, all sparkling with frost as if they had been sprinkled with diamonds and precious

stones. Everything different to anything that I had ever seen before, all new, fresh and delightful—the delicious keen air driving away the last memory of the train with its stuffiness and heat and dirty, oily smells—a never-to-be-forgotten drive breathing new life into me and just putting me into that frame of mind which fits one to receive the sharpest enjoyment.

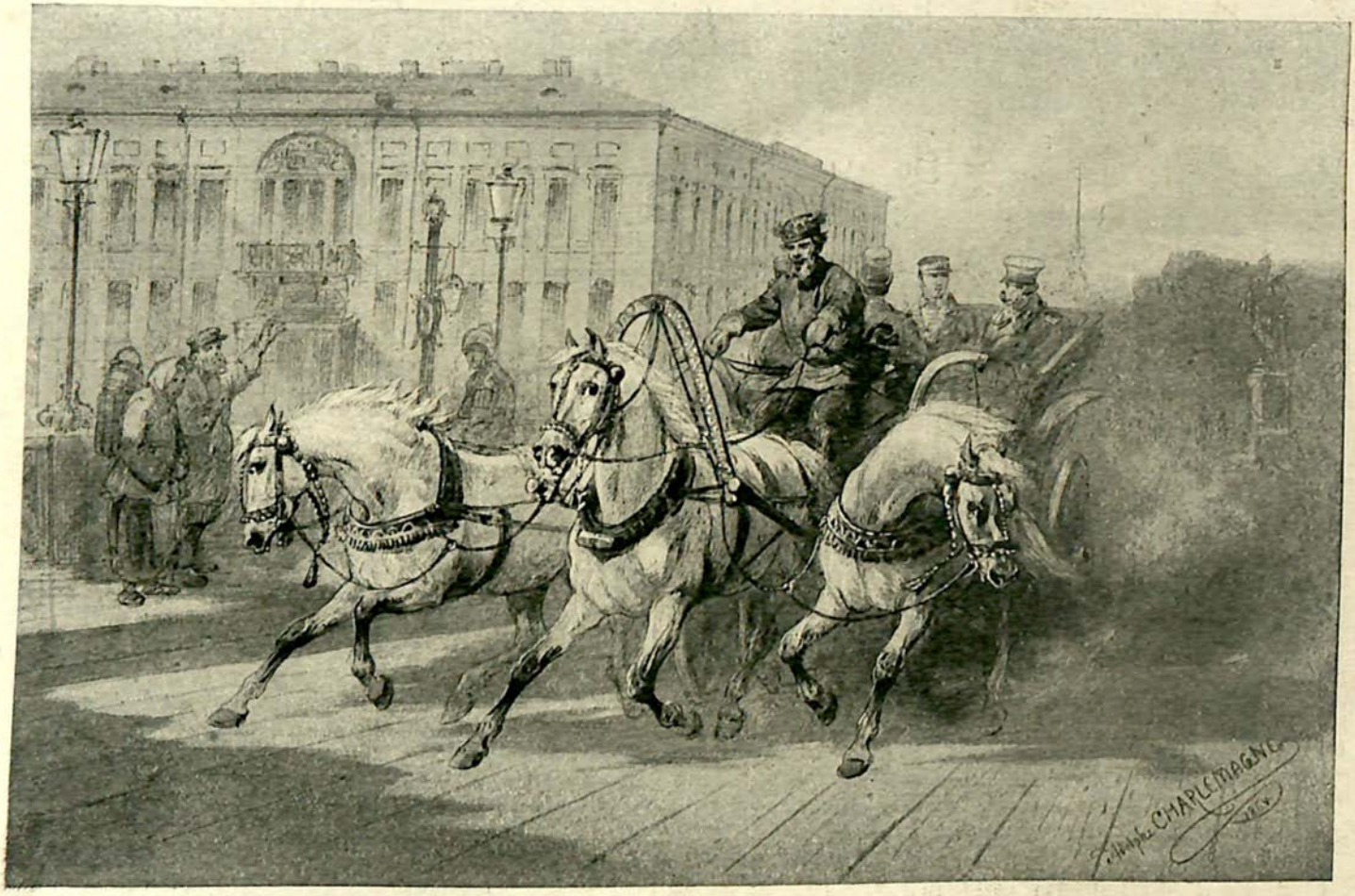
Before doing anything else, travel-stained, untidy and uncomfortable as I was, I had to go to the Embassy to deliver the despatches which I was carrying. For a wonder, Lord and Lady Napier were neither dining out nor entertaining at home, and the Ambassador had given orders that I was to be shown up at once. Rather an ordeal to have to face the great man, upon whom a first impression may mean so much, without even casting off the slough of four days and nights of travel! However, Lord and Lady Napier put me at my ease at once. The diplomatist abroad is always hungry for the last news, the latest piece of gossip, social or political, and my chief kept me talking in the friendliest way. When at last it was time to say good night, he called me back and said:

"By the by, tell your people at home to send you all letters in the Foreign Office bag—none by the Post Office, where all our letters are opened."

"Surely," I said, "they would not dream of opening the correspondence of so humble a person as myself."

"Don't be too sure of that," broke in Lady Napier. "The other day my children's governess received two letters by the same post from different parts of England. Each contained a photograph. The two letters came in one envelope, the two photographs in the other!"

As I drove away from the Embassy I could think of nothing but the great charm of my Chief and Chiefess. She was certainly one of the most fascinating women I ever had the good fortune to meet. Handsome, clever, agreeable, well read, very dignified, beautifully dressed, she was delightful to look at, delightful to listen to; the type of what an ambassadress should be, doing the honours of the Queen's house on the Neva like the great lady that she was. She had at that time not very good health and



EMBASSY HOUSE, ST. PETERSBURG.

From a water-colour drawing by Charlemagne, 1864.

the climate of Russia did not suit her; but she was none the less a noble helpmeet to His Excellency; to all of us she was so gracious and kind, so thoughtful and considerate, that we worshipped her. I reverence her memory. As for Lord Napier, I don't think that anybody who ever served under him would say that it would be possible to have a kinder or a better chief. He was undeniably a most astute diplomatist, full of resource, a master of the art of ingratiating himself with those who came into contact with him.

The Russians, from the Emperor downward, all liked him, and he was able to put through, by the stern force of pleasing, many a tangled piece of business which would have been perhaps an impossibility to others. I shall cite one notable instance later on. In society he was popular wherever he went. He was an admirable *raconteur* and always a kindly listener, possessing the art of drawing out men so as to make them show at their best, and they were duly grateful. His ready wit and power of repartee were enhanced by the most infectious twinkle of his eye; he was one of those rare men who laugh with their eyes, and to me that quality is irresistible. He was young for an ambassador (only forty-two years old when he reached that rank in 1861), but looked older than his years, and even in his earliest days could never have been anything but a *grand seigneur*. Quite apart from the joy of living in intimacy with such a man, any young diplomatist who might be attached to his Embassy had a rare chance to learn his business under so able a chief.

It was a piece of good fortune to find my old friend John Lumley, afterwards Ambassador at Rome, and created Lord Savile, established here as First Secretary. He was very popular in Russian society, as he was everywhere else, and it was a great advantage to have him as sponsor. He was most kind and introduced me to many of the pleasantest people in St. Petersburg. The day after my arrival he drove me about, and took me to see several of his friends. Among others a lovely young widow—only twenty-four years of age—Countess Koucheleff-Bezbarodko, who lived in a palace the magnificence of which I have never seen surpassed. It would have been difficult to determine which was the more

beautiful, the lady or her home. The casket was worthy of the jewel, and that is the best that can be said. She afterwards married the eldest son of Prince Suvoroff, the Governor-General of St. Petersburg. But it is idle to expatiate upon the grandeur and luxury of these great palaces; they are a matter of common knowledge, and I shall write no more about them, though of the kindness and friendliness with which we were greeted in them one would hardly weary of talking. The Russian noble has in perfection the greatest of all the qualities which go to make up the character of a *grand seigneur*, that of making his guests, however humble they may be, feel at their ease. That is what makes society in this brilliant city so pleasant.

To English people the familiarity of the Russians with English literature has always made a great bond of sympathy. A new novel by Dickens or Thackeray was looked forward to with almost as much excitement as it was in London, and the English classics have become the common property of all. I was not a little astonished when on my being presented to Count Orloff Davidoff, one of the great nobles, he asked me what relation I was to the historian of Greece. He had studied at Edinburgh University. When poor Thackeray died at the end of the year the consternation and sorrow were most touching. He was one of the last men with whom I spoke before leaving home.

On the evening before I left London for St. Petersburg I was up in a box at the Promenade Concert. Down below I saw Thackeray's gigantic figure, his white head towering above the crowd, and I ran down to bid him farewell. He had always been very kind to me as he was to all young people, and I was naturally greatly flattered and fascinated by his charm—for he could be very charming when he chose, though, like his great rival Dickens, and even Addison as Pope tells us, he resented anything like being drawn out in the company of strangers. I several times met him at dinner at Millais', when he and I would be the only guests, making up a quartette with the genial, handsome host and his no less handsome wife. After dinner Mrs. Millais used to leave us, and we three men adjourned to the great studio where we might smoke in armchair comfort.

Thackeray would have been very handsome but for the broken nose which he himself so often caricatured, but which with his round face gave him a sort of cherubic look, like one of Raphael's winged heads, rather robbing it of its masculine vigour and seeming almost absurdly in contrast with his great size and strong nature. It was delightful to see him beaming behind his spectacles with his long legs stretched out in front of him, the picture of placid content, and to listen to his words, kindly, witty, full of old-world anecdote, told in the English of Addison—the fruit of his studies for Esmond and his lectures on the eighteenth century Essayists—with just a little delightful spice of good-natured cynicism which was as cayenne pepper animating the *olla podrida* of his talk. Sometimes he was so gay and so young that he seemed just what he must have been when he called out "adsum" at the Charter House. Thackeray was very fond of Millais. He admired his art, and the great painter's large, honest, bluff and rough nature, his innocence of all humbug or affectation, which Thackeray loathed above all things, appealed to him. The two were perfectly happy together, so in that studio Thackeray was at his best. And what a best it was!

Less than a month after I reached St. Petersburg the news that Thackeray was dead was flashed along the wires to a capital where he was almost as well known by those who had never seen him as he was in his own familiar Kensington. I had been greatly struck by his popularity in Russia, and had looked forward to some day telling him how great was his greatness in that land of cold snow and warm hearts. The fatal 24th of December robbed me of that pleasure. It created a sad gap among his friends, who loved him as dearly for himself as others did for his work.

The last time I saw Millais was in February, 1896, a few days after Leighton's funeral. He stopped me in St. James's Street, and we had a little talk, chiefly about the friend whom we had so recently lost. He was looking well and hearty, but was closely muffled up. The terrible disease in his throat made him almost inaudible. He spoke in a hoarse whisper, and at the end of the summer one more President of the Royal Academy was carried to St. Paul's Cathedral. The careers of the two men were a curious

sequel to the prophecy which Thackeray wrote to Millais from Rome in 1852: "I have seen in Rome a versatile young dog who will run you hard for the Presidentship some day!"

A few days after my arrival I received a summons to the Winter Palace to be presented to the Emperor. The ceremony was very different from the march past of many hundred men, which constitutes a levee at home. It was rather an ordeal, for I had to go by myself with no tutelary deity in the shape of an ambassador to present me and show me the ropes, as is done at most other courts. I found a batch of eleven other victims of all nations, who had been summoned for the same purpose, and we were shown into a rather shabbily-furnished room decorated with a few bad pictures of reviews—altogether a violent contrast to the magnificence of the staircase and corridors through which we were led by servants in gorgeous apparel, with soldiers in splendid uniforms mounting guard. Presently the Tsar came in, a tall, imposing figure with a very kindly face and genial manner.

He called up each of us in turn, and when we had been presented by a chamberlain he had something amiable and pleasant to greet us with. Certainly the Emperor was a born king of men. His was a royalty about which there could be no doubt. His smile was charming, but when he was displeased he knew how to show it. I saw both smile and frown that morning.

When it came to my turn to be named he asked me where I had been educated. I told him at Eton and Oxford.

"Ah," said His Majesty, "j'ai été à Oxford. L'orateur public a même prononcé un discours en Latin en mon honneur."

"Dont je suis sûr," I answered, "que votre Majesté n'a pas compris un traître mot——"

The clouds gathered on Jupiter's brow and there was thunder in the air. "Who," they said as plainly as speech itself, "is this whipper-snapper who dares to say that I, the Emperor of all the Russias. am an ignoramus that does not understand Latin?"

—"A cause de notre prononciation barbare," I continued. The clouds were dispersed, the sun shone again—all was well with the world. The Emperor laughed heartily at the expense of the

public orator, and his "prononciation barbare," and kept me talking for some few minutes. He was always very gracious afterwards when I met him at any entertainment, and never failed to give me a friendly little nod or word of recognition.

The surroundings at the presentation to the Empress were far more imposing. It took place at night in the great gilt drawing-room inside the White ball-room where we assembled, about fifteen of us. The rooms were lighted by innumerable candles, and no light gives such a look of magnificence. The liveries and uniforms were, of course, brilliant, and the Empress' negroes in blue and gold jackets with wide oriental trousers looked as if they might have been the personal attendants of the Caliph Haroun Al Raschid himself. We had to wait some time before we were wanted, for the wives of the Italian and Prussian Ministers had to be received in audience before us. The Empress was a tall, graceful lady with a sweet expression and most charming manners. She looked very delicate and, indeed, had bad health. suffering, I fear, a great deal; it is not everybody who can make a stand against the climate of St. Petersburg; to her I was told that it was poisonous.

It must be rather a trial, even for an Empress who has gained experience after years of such functions, to walk round a circle of men, seen for the first time, and be so ready-witted as to say something pleasant to each. But how well she did it! Every man present was under the charm. She had heard of the letter which I brought from Countess Apponyi to Princess Kotchoubey (it seemed as if everything was known to everybody in this wonderful capital). She knew Countess Apponyi well and asked a great deal after her; she also talked a good deal about the Prince and Princess of Wales. Her grace made conversation quite easy, and after a few minutes she made a pretty little bow and passed on to the next man.

The Empress Marie was a Princess of Hesse, daughter of Duke Louis II., and her marriage with the Emperor was a pure love-match. Indeed it was an open secret that the Emperor Nicholas was not best pleased when he heard of the engagement; he had looked for a more brilliant marriage for his son and heir.

My father, who was at Frankfort at the time, saw the great, handsome Tsar arrive, and drive out to make acquaintance with his future daughter-in-law; he was looking as stern and as dark as Erebus. He came back from the visit, his face wreathed in smiles. The sweet Princess, then in the heyday of her youth and beauty, had conquered. She had caught the dreaded potentate in the network of a charm which was irresistible, and which remained a precious possession to the end of time, for it was something that the cruel climate which tarnished the freshness of her beauty could not impair, much less destroy.

* * * * * * *

In writing these sketches I have no pretension to dabble in history; for that I am neither fitted nor documented. All I desire is to place on record some memories at first hand of certain remarkable people with whom I have been brought in contact. In order, however, to understand the state of feeling in Russia at the time with which I am dealing, it is impossible not to allude, however briefly, to the Polish insurrection of which the influence seemed to pervade everything. Poland was in the mouths of all men—Poland and the attitude of England.

The year 1863 had opened grimly enough for Poland. The Tsar's brother, the Grand Duke Constantine Nicolaievitch, was Viceroy at Warsaw, and the Government had intelligence to the effect that the city was a hotbed of conspiracies and intrigues, and that an insurrection might be expected to take place at any moment. To prevent this calamity drastic measures were adopted. A good many years earlier the Emperor Nicholas had abolished military conscription in Poland; it was now determined to revive it, but under conditions which would enable the Government to throttle the revolutionary movement by ridding the country of all dangerous men. The old practice of drawing the conscripts by lot was abandoned, and the authorities were invested with the power of arbitrarily choosing the men who should be taken for service.

Nor was this the only hardship, for the conscription being limited to the towns, Poland was to be robbed of its most capable

men, trade and business must be paralysed, and only the most ignorant and valueless dregs of the population left behind. Who was responsible for this wicked and cruel policy I never heard. It was universally condemned abroad, and not a few Russians recognized the folly of it. Among the Poles, the Marquis Wielopolski, a former governor-general, was the only man who supported it. No man condemned the proceedings of the Government more strongly than Lord Napier. In a despatch to the Foreign Office of January the 26th he described them as in fact "a design to make a clean sweep of the revolutionary youth of Poland; to shut up the most energetic and dangerous spirits in the restraints of the Russian army; it was simply a plan," he said, "to kidnap the opposition and carry it off to Siberia or the Caucasus."

On the evening of the 14th of January the Grand Duke signed the decree, and during that night houses were broken into and 2,500 men were carried off by press-gangs of police and soldiers. Where the young men who had been marked down were not forthcoming their parents were taken and held as pledges.

Lord Napier's appreciation of the decree exactly represented the feeling with which it was received at Warsaw. The Poles were lashed to fury, and the torch of revolution was lighted. A so-called Central Committee was formed, which was neither more nor less than a secret society issuing its orders for murder and arson, orders faithfully obeyed, with every aggravation that the ingenuity of cruelty could suggest.

The mystery of this modern Vehmgericht was well kept. All the cunning and vigilance of the Russian police was at fault. No man knew who were its members, where they met, or what was the machinery with which they worked. Death, swift and secret, followed upon their decisions. Their blows fell in darkness, their vengeance was assured, and none could tell who would be the next victim. Only the murderer was safe, and he only so long as he continued to murder without question. To the peasants a big bribe was held out—such a bribe as is not unknown in history elsewhere. Here is the proclamation of the Central Committee:

Art. 1. Land held under any title whatsoever, corvée,

rent or otherwise, by small farmers, together with all buildings thereon, becomes from this date the freehold property of the holder, without any obligation of rent or otherwise, except the duty of paying taxes and serving the country.

Art. 2. The former proprietors will receive compensation from the national funds by means of Government stock.

Art. 3. The amount of compensation and the nature of the stock will be settled by separate decrees.

Art. 4. All ukases, laws, etc., published by the usurping Government on the subject of peasant leases are declared null and void.

Art. 5. The present decree applies not only to private estates, but also to Crown lands, lands bestowed by the Crown, Church property, etc.*

Such an edict as this, taken in conjunction with the crimes and horrors for which the Central Committee was responsible, led to reprisals which were hardly less terrible than the deeds which they avenged. I do not propose to go into any detail in regard to the insurrection. The appointment of Langiewicz as dictator, his abandonment of the cause in a way which suggested something very like cowardice, his submission to the Austrians at Cracow, the rebel bands hiding in the forests, the destruction of railways, the attempt to poison Wielopolski and his family, all the incidents and tragedies of a great rebellion, make picturesque reading, but it must be sought elsewhere.

It was a reign of terror in Poland, and above all in Lithuania, where General Muravieff in his headquarters at Vilna ruled with a rod of redhot iron. The indignation of Europe was aroused; but it was largely an ignorant indignation, for whereas the English and French newspapers were generally fed with stories against the Russians, there was complete silence as to the provocation on the other side. Mr. Sutherland Edwards, the *Times* correspondent at Warsaw, a most competent and above all a most just witness, told me that there was much exaggeration and much invention about the information which was sold to the foreign

* "Annual Register," 1863.

press by certain travelling Jews of the lower sort. News to be marketable must be such as would tell against the Government. Edwards had no reason to take sides with the Russians, for he had just been turned out of Warsaw, bag and baggage, at twenty-four hours' notice, but he was far too honest a politician to allow any personal treatment of himself to influence him in discussing a great question of national importance; it was a mistake to deal with him in so ungenerous a fashion, but it was only one among many mistakes.

There were many Russians, loyal subjects to the Tsar and enthusiastically devoted to their own country, who recognized and deplored those mistakes. Above all, these just men viewed with indignation the barbarous methods of General Muravieff, the man who, above all others, was responsible for the feeling aroused in the rest of Europe. Prince Suvoroff, the Governor-General of St. Petersburg, a great friend and favourite of the Emperor, spoke out bravely about this. A subscription had been set on foot to present Muravieff with a statue of the Virgin Mary in silver, for which the Metropolitan found the inscription, "Thy name is Victory." The subject was being discussed at Tsarskoe Selo at the Imperial table, when Prince Suvoroff declared aloud that "he could not understand men giving a blessed image to a hangman." These bold words, uttered unrebuked in the presence of the Tsar, created a great sensation, and induced many men to speak their minds more openly than they had up to then dared to do. It showed also that the Emperor—essentially a good and humane ruler, as he proved to be over and over again—while determined to put down the rebellion, abhorred the methods that were being adopted, otherwise Prince Suvoroff's speech would not have been passed over. The downfall of Muravieff was considered to be imminent. He was not recalled, however, until April, 1865, being raised to the rank of Count, and he died the following year at his country place, Surez, near Luga. A bronze statue of him was erected in Vilna in 1898.

Meanwhile Edwards, whose banishment from Warsaw had removed a man who was truly desirous of sending home a fair

and honest account of affairs, thus giving a free hand to more unscrupulous writers, was being shadowed by spies who took note of all his visitors. My Russian master, who also gave him lessons—a mild, harmless little man, who had taught the great Bismarck—was followed home one day as a very suspicious character. It would have been laughable if it had not been so sad. All this trouble taken to hinder and annoy a man whose sole object was to check the prosperity of lies! These flourished accordingly.

Political crises are always fruitful in exaggeration and falsehood. Never, perhaps, were they so rife as during the Polish insurrection; the country was wild and inaccessible, information vague and uncertain, chaffered as an article of trade by newspedlars, carried from great distances and losing nothing by the way; horrors were invented for hungry listeners—and there was no one to contradict. Truth remained hiding at the very lowest depths of her well. Take, for instance, the trial of Count Zamoyski, about which the English newspapers were greatly excited, one paper going as far as to say that he had been condemned to death on the strength of confessions extracted from him by torture whilst he was in prison. As a matter of fact no man could have had a fairer trial. He was found guilty of rebellion—as to that there could be no denial. It was abundantly proved that he had been a member of the Central Committee and privy to all its so-called decrees and ordinances. He was sentenced to banishment from Poland, took up his residence in France, and finally went to Cracow, where he died in his bed at the good old age of seventy-four. No milder sentence could well have been passed upon him.

As for the stories of torture which were freely put about, most searching investigations on the spot proved that there was no shadow of foundation for them. Great severities were practised, especially in Lithuania under General Muravieff; floggings as judicial punishments in execution of sentences officially pronounced were frequent; but no evidence was ever produced to show that flogging had been used for the purpose of extracting evidence, and as for instruments of torture they simply did not exist.

The Poles were past-masters in the art of exciting dramatic emotion and surrounding base crimes with a political halo. Some

scoundrel would be condemned to death for murder, rapine, arson or some other abomination. Immediately he was glorified into a political hero and martyr. Such canonizations are not unknown elsewhere. All Warsaw turned out in deep mourning to do him honour, and witness the sacrifice. Ladies of the highest rank, robed and veiled in crape, weeping bitterly, knelt on the public place to offer up prayers for the soul of the victim. Impartial men with strong nerves told me that they had been so affected by such a scene that they forgot for the moment that they were witnessing the just expiation of a hideous crime; half stupefied as in a dream, they saw the death of a Christian martyr. The excellence of the stage management had its effect. Popular resentment against the Government was stimulated, and, what was still more important to the agitators, the kind hearts of foreign correspondents were touched, so that the most harrowing stories were launched out east and west, north and south, stirring animosities and calling up political hatred in all its bitterness.

The excitement aroused in England and France amounted to intoxication; but it was an uninformed excitement, for it is no exaggeration to say that there was not one man in ten thousand who had taken the pains to read up the causes that had led up to the insurrection and its repression, and still fewer who had any knowledge of the complicated history of the deadly feud between the two races, a feud which had lasted for centuries.

The late Lord Salisbury was one of those few. In April, 1863, he published an article on Poland, which he followed up in the same month of the following year by another paper on Foreign Policy. Both were republished in book form by Mr. Murray in 1905. The first article gives a short and clear history of the whole question; the second is a scathing condemnation of Lord Russell's treatment of international affairs, especially in the two cases of Poland and the Danish duchies. Considering what has taken place since that time, the outcome of Lord Russell's policy, every student of foreign politics should make himself acquainted with those two articles written by a great master.

I have shown how numbers of generously-minded Russians disavowed and repudiated the methods of repression which had

been adopted, especially in Lithuania. None the less was all Russia of one mind as to the imperative necessity of putting down the insurrection. Every thinking man knew that it was a matter of life and death to his country; in a despatch from which I shall quote presently Prince Gortchakoff showed that very clearly. If the Poles were to become dominant there would be a repetition in provinces largely inhabited by Russians of the horrors which took place two centuries earlier when they were in possession of Moscow, and of which a foretaste had already been given in the murders and attempts to murder of the last few months. Austrian Poland and Prussian Poland must be drawn into the furnace and a general conflagration ensue.

But Lord Russell "cared for none of these things." Here was a rare opportunity for him to give effect to his favourite policy of "meddle and muddle" (I do not know who invented the phrase in his honour, but how good it was!) and he availed himself of it freely.

The state of public feeling in England and France fully justified a friendly intercession by the Governments of both countries, praying the Tsar to exercise his clemency on behalf of the rebellious Poles. But it did not justify Lord Russell in adopting the hectoring language which he used, language not only reading Russia a lesson as to how she should govern in her own dominions, but even conveying threats as to what might happen if his advice were not followed. His conduct of the affair not only infuriated the Russians, but also alienated the French Government, who were greatly displeased at having been brought into a ridiculous position.

On the 2nd of March, 1863, Lord Russell wrote a despatch to Lord Napier, of course for presentation to Prince Gortchakoff, in which, on the strength of the fact that "the Kingdom of Poland was constituted and placed in connexion with the Russian Empire by the Treaty of 1815, to which Great Britain was a contracting party," he claimed the right of Great Britain "to express its opinion upon the events now taking place," and in rather slipshod language, such as might be adopted by a schoolboy mediating in a football squabble, went on to offer his amiable advice to the Emperor: "Why should not His Imperial Majesty, whose benevolence is

generally and cheerfully acknowledged, put an end to this bloody conflict," etc., etc.

On the 10th of April he returned to the charge, in a despatch the phraseology of which Lord Salisbury described as being "as menacing as will often be found in despatches even of a professedly hostile character," once more insisting that the Emperor's position as regards the Poles was due to the grace and favour of the Treaty of Vienna, and quite different to what it would have been had His Majesty held Poland as part of the original dominions of the Crown, or if he had acquired it by the unassisted success of his army and unsanctioned by the consent of any other Power, etc., etc. The formal declaration that Russia had broken her treaty engagements, the intimation that she had not fulfilled her duties of comity as a member of the community of nations, the distinct statement that the course she was pursuing was dangerous to the general peace of Europe, "and might under possible circumstances produce complications of the most serious nature—all these expressions, interpreted by diplomatic usage, were simple threats of war."*

These threats were accentuated by a conversation which Lord Russell reported as having taken place between himself and Baron Brunnow, the Russian Ambassador. Baron Brunnow said there was one question which he felt entitled to ask, and that was whether the communication Her Majesty's Government were about to make at St. Petersburg was of a pacific nature. I replied that it was, but that as I did not wish to mislead him I must say something more. Her Majesty's Government had no intentions that were otherwise than pacific, still less any concert with other Powers for any but pacific purposes.

"But the state of things might change. The present overture of Her Majesty's Government might be rejected as the representation of March 2nd had been rejected by the Imperial Government. The insurrection in Poland might continue and might assume larger proportions; the atrocities on both sides might be aggravated, and extended to a wider range of country. If in such a state of affairs the Emperor of Russia were to take no steps of a conciliatory nature, dangers and complications might arise not at present in contemplation."

* Lord Salisbury—"Foreign Policy," p. 198.

" If this was not a threat of war," says Lord Salisbury, " language has no meaning." Every one of these *mights* and *might be's* did occur, but the threats remained mere gas. Prince Gortchakoff, cool, calm, and courteous, refused with firmness to acknowledge any of Lord Russell's pretensions.

In the meantime, in the month of April the Emperor made the offer of an amnesty to Poland, granting " a free pardon to all those of our subjects in the Kingdom implicated in the late troubles who have not incurred the responsibility of other crimes or misdemeanours committed on service in the ranks of our army, and who may before the 1st (13th) of May lay down their arms and return to their allegiance." This offer the Central Committee, who now called themselves the Provisional Government, in insulting terms contemptuously refused. They published a proclamation which said:

" Poland is well aware what confidence she can place in this pretended amnesty, and in the promises of the Russian Government. But to avoid any mistake, we formally declare that we reject all these false concessions. It was not with the intention of obtaining more or less liberal concessions that we took up arms, but to get rid of the detested yoke of a foreign government, and to reconquer our ancient and complete independence."

The treatment by the Poles of the Emperor's magnanimous offer furnished the answer to the officious advice given by Lord Russell.

There was one class of unfortunates who suffered by the Polish insurrection of whom little or nothing has been said or written, and whose troubles have therefore excited no commiseration out of Russia. The landed proprietors of Poland, wishing to introduce into the country improved agricultural methods, imported from Germany a number of Protestant labourers. These men during the rebellion were persecuted with all the animosity of bigoted Catholicism and conscious inferiority by the Schliachta, or petty nobility, seconded by the jealousy of the peasants, who naturally looked upon them as interlopers—" blacklegs " as men say nowadays—and as having no right to cumber the country. Their dwellings were destroyed, their families murdered, and the survivors dared not go back to their homes.

The Imperial Government, having been compelled to take the case

in hand, resolved to send 1,800 of these poor fellows to the government of Samatra, a rich province to which many of the exiled Poles had already been sent. There is no doubt that if the Russians acted with severity, the Poles outdid them in cruelty. The two were well matched, and between them it is fearful to think what must have been the general average of misery!

I have alluded above to what Prince Suvoroff said of General Muravieff. A little later in the year another scheme was set on foot by certain ultra-Russians to build a church at Vilna and dedicate it to St. Michael, Muravieff's patron saint, in honour of the glory of the General and to celebrate his quelling of the insurrection in Lithuania. The plan met with much opposition, and the Maréchal de la Noblesse of the district of Tsarskoe Selo, on being invited to support the project, wrote an indignant letter in reply, asking what conduct on his part could have led the originators to suppose that he approved the actions of the General. General Muravieff stood in a peculiar position for an officer holding a high command under a despotic government. The authorities accepted his services and so gave their moral support and countenance to his policy; but they took no steps to defend him from the animadversions of his enemies, nor did any Russian feel that he was committing an indiscretion in openly canvassing the conduct of the tyrant of Vilna.

All this showed that the Russians were enjoying far greater liberty of both press and speech than was believed abroad. In this respect there was a marked change since the last reign. Speech was free enough, sometimes startlingly so. There was a certain amount of censorship of the journalistic press; but as regards literature in general, books were openly sold which under Nicholas no bookseller would have dared to stock upon his shelves.

With this arrow in his quiver Prince Gortchakoff wrote: "If Lord Russell followed attentively the productions of the Press devoted to the Polish rebellion, he must be aware that the insurgents demand neither an amnesty, nor an autonomy, nor a representation either more or less complete. The absolute independence of the Kingdom even would be for them only a means for arriving at the final object of their aspirations. This object is dominion over

provinces where the immense majority are Russians by race or by religion; in a word, it is Poland extended to the two seas, which would inevitably bring about a claim to the Polish provinces belonging to other neighbouring Powers.

"We desire to pronounce no judgment upon these aspirations. It suffices for us to prove that they exist, and that the Polish insurgents do not conceal them. The final result in which they would arrive cannot be doubtful. It would be a general conflagration which the elements of disorder scattered through all countries would be brought to complicate, and which seek for an opportunity to subvert Europe."

One would have imagined that the dignified and lofty tone adopted by the Prince, combined with the avowed pretensions of the rebels, would have convinced Lord Russell that his interference would not be accepted, and could only end in the humiliation of England. Nothing could stop Lord Russell.

On the 17th of June he again wrote a despatch to Lord Napier with instructions to read it to Prince Gortchakoff, and leave a copy with him. That despatch was perhaps one of the most insolent communications ever addressed to a friendly Power; no government could admit the interference of another country in dictating the measures which it should take for the maintenance of law and order among its own people, which is the exclusive right and duty of every independent Power, nor is it intelligible that any such advice should be offered unless the candid friend should be prepared to enforce it at the cannon's mouth. The despatch in question was the one which formulated the famous "six points." This is what it said:

"In present circumstances it appears to Her Majesty's Government that nothing less than the following outline of measures should be adopted as the bases of pacification:

"1. Complete and general amnesty.

"2. National representation, with powers similar to those which are fixed by the Charter of the 15th (27th) of November, 1815.

"3. Poles to be named to public offices in such a manner as to form a distinct national administration, having the confidence of the country.

"4. Full and entire liberty of conscience; repeal of the restrictions imposed on Catholic worship.

"5. The Polish language recognized in the kingdom as the official language, and used as such in the administration of the law and in education.

"6. The establishment of a regular and legal system of recruiting.

"These six points might serve as the indications of measures to be adopted, after calm and full deliberation.

"What Her Majesty's Government propose, therefore, consists in these three propositions:

"1st. The adoption of the six points enumerated as bases of negotiation.

"2nd. A provisional suspension of arms to be proclaimed by the Emperor of Russia.

"3rd. A conference of the eight Powers who signed the Treaty of Vienna."

Prince Gortchakoff's answer was crushing, the more so as it was couched in the most courteous language of diplomacy, and was based upon an unanswerable chain of logical arguments. Lord Russell was very quietly shown that he was dealing with matters which he did not understand and with which he had no concern. Similar communications were addressed to Baron Budberg, the Russian Ambassador at Paris, for the benefit of M. Drouyn de Lhuys, the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, who had the mortification of finding himself compelled to share in a humiliation which was odious to him.

A despatch to Baron Budberg contained the following words: "As regards the responsibility which His Majesty may assume in his international relations, those relations are regulated by international law. The violation of those principles may alone lead to a responsibility. Our august Master has always respected and observed these principles towards other States. His Majesty has the right to expect and to demand the same respect on the part of the other Powers." M. Drouyn de Lhuys was furious, and it was not long, as we shall see, before he had the opportunity to make Lord Russell feel it.

Lord Russell climbed down not handsomely. In a despatch to Lord Napier of the 11th of August he said: "If Russia does not perform all that depends upon her to further the moderate and conciliatory views of the three Powers" [Great Britain, Austria and France] "if she does not enter upon the path which is opened to her by friendly counsels, she makes herself responsible for the serious consequences which the prolongation of the troubles of Poland may produce."

And that was the lame and impotent conclusion of a game of brag and insolent bluster which had been carried on for many months. The fizzling out of a damp squib!

But there is one story which Mr. Hennessy, Conservative member for King's County, told in the House of Commons, *and was never contradicted*, which is too good and too characteristic to be omitted—I take it verbatim from Lord Salisbury's essay on Foreign Politics, p. 202.

"When Prince Gortchakoff's last defiance had arrived, and the Government had made up their minds to practise the better part of valour, Lord Russell made a speech at Blairgowrie, and being somewhat encouraged and cheered by the various circumstances of consolation which are administered by an entertainment of that kind, he recovered after dinner somewhat of his wonted courage, and under the influence of the valour so acquired he proclaimed that, in his opinion, Russia had sacrificed her treaty right to Poland. Having made the statement thus publicly, he felt that he could not do less than insert it into the despatch to Prince Gortchakoff, with whom it was proposed to terminate the inglorious correspondence. He flattered himself, indeed, that so hostile an announcement, while not leading actually to a war, might enable him to ride off with something like a flourish, which his friends might construe into a triumph.

"And so the despatch was sent off, formally bringing the correspondence to a close, and concluding with the grandiose announcement that, in the opinion of the British Government, Russia had forfeited the title to Poland which she had acquired by the Treaty of Vienna. But even this modest attempt to escape from disgrace

was not destined to succeed. When the despatch reached St. Petersburg, it was shown to Prince Gortchakoff before being formally presented. 'You had better not present this concluding sentence to me,' is reported to have been the Prince's brief but significant observation. The hint was taken, the despatch was sent back to England and submitted anew to the Foreign Secretary. Doubtless with disgust, but bowing to his inexorable destiny, he executed this new act of self-abasement. The offending sentence was erased by its author with the resolution of a Christian martyr. In this form it was sent back to Russia; and it still bears, as published to the world, in the bald mutilation of the paragraph with which it concludes and in the confusion of its dates, the marks of its enforced and reluctant revision."

The confusion of the dates is very significant. The despatch was originally dated in September and refers to the despatch of August 11th, as *of the 11th ultimo*. As accepted by the Prince it was dated *in October*, but still refers to the August despatch as *of the 11th ultimo*.

The humiliation of England was complete. We had threatened and we had not performed. We had encouraged the Poles to believe that they might count upon our protection, and when we found that something more than brave words would be needed, we deserted them. That was the view taken abroad of Lord Russell's policy. It was treated with derision and contempt. In Russia there was at that time a very strong feeling of friendliness towards the English. But it was a social friendship, not a political appreciation, and I believe that was largely, perhaps one might say entirely, due to the great personal charm and popularity of Lord and Lady Napier. As a power to be reckoned with we had ceased to exist.

I remember upon one occasion my old friend, the Marquis de Montebello, who was afterwards French Ambassador at St. Petersburg (as his father had been before him) saying, "Autrefois lorsqu'il s'agissait d'une guerre en Europe on vous consultait. Aujourd'hui on vous dit—zut!" My answer to him was, "Don't be too sure —Lord Russell is not England."

* * * * * * *

General Cassius Clay was United States Minister in Russia at the time of which I am writing. He was rather a notorious person whose name *Punch* had, owing to his virulent abuse of England, translated into Brutus Mud. One day General Clay came up to me and began speaking in the friendliest way about England. After some generalities he turned the conversation on to the Polish question, belauding Lord Russell's despatches, which he said had made " his old Anglo-Saxon blood boil in his veins when he saw the magnanimous attitude of an English statesman." I don't think that clinical thermometers had been invented in those days, but it would have been interesting to have taken the temperature of the good General's " Anglo-Saxon blood " when he came to read the final collapse of all the bluster.

The insurrection died a not altogether natural death in 1864. It had been a hopeless affair from the first, and the moral influence of a secret Treaty concluded between Prussia and Russia* extinguished the last embers of the fire. Bands of peasants, undrilled, armed with scythes and with such primitive weapons as might come to hand, lurking houseless, half starved and miserably clothed in the frozen mazes of pathless forests, could not for long resist the trained battalions of the Tsar and the curse of the climate. Langiewicz saw that the last trick in the game had been trumped, and the dictator left the poor wretches to their fate.

I have one more tale to tell of the Polish revolution. The race of Bobadils is not extinct. For them proclamations of neutrality are things of no account, at which they snap their fingers; so long as matters go well with them they are as truculent as their own swords; but once let them fall into difficulties and be taken prisoners, their cries are piteous, and the Foreign Offices of their various countries are besieged with prayers that their Ambassadors may be instructed to interfere on their behalf.

One day, when the Polish insurrection was still ablaze, there came a batch of telegrams to the Embassy directing Lord Napier to plead on behalf of a certain English gentleman who, having been taken red-handed in some murderous attack, would be tried by court martial and shot unless some pressure could be brought to

* Brockhaus—" Conversations Lexicon," Art. Polen.

bear on his behalf. Lord Napier knew that it would be useless to enter into a diplomatic correspondence on the subject, so he at once asked for an audience of the Tsar, which was immediately granted. It was not a pleasant duty.

On his return from the palace he told me that when he acquainted the Emperor with the object of his visit, His Majesty looked very black and deeply displeased; he said that he could have great sympathy with his own misguided subjects who were persuaded by agitators into the belief that they were suffering from grievous wrongs at his hands; but what excuse could be made for the subject of a friendly Power who came to add fuel to the flame? Lord Napier pointed out that there was just this excuse for the gentleman, that his mother was a Pole, and he prayed earnestly for mercy. In the end the Tsar, as a special favour to Lord Napier, granted him a free pardon—of course on parole to leave Poland and not again to take part in the rebellion. It was a generous and kingly act, a gracious favour to Lord Napier, and a proof of the esteem in which my much-loved chief was held.*

The Emperor Alexander was a most magnanimous ruler. Many and signal were the proofs of the love which he bore his people. His liberation of the serfs, a measure of humanity which has perhaps never been exceeded, and which in 1864 he extended to Poland, in spite of all that had occurred, bore eloquent testimony to his generosity. And at the time when I was in Russia the people returned his love with interest. He was to them like a divinity.

Many and many a time have I seen the *mujiks* in the dead of winter standing bareheaded, facing a cruel blast coming down the river from the Ladoga Lake, until the Emperor's sledge should be out of sight—a little, simple one-horse sledge, without any guard, nor even an aide-de-camp. He was better protected by the love of his people than he could have been by all the myrmidons of his police. There were no Nihilists in those days; the word had been coined by Dostoievski, the novelist, but in another sense.

* Curiously enough, by one of those ineptitudes for which private secretaries are famous, the brother of this very gentleman, the son of a Polish mother, had been shortly before attached to the British Embassy at St. Petersburg.

Years afterwards, when the news came of the hideous murder of the great Tsar, looking back upon those loyal times, I could not believe my ears. It was incomprehensible. So barbarous did it seem—so barbarous and withal so foolish.

Surely no man was ever more truly a prophet in his own country than was Prince Gortchakoff at St. Petersburg in the autumn of 1863. His popularity was something phenomenal, and for a great deal of it he had to thank Lord Russell. Praise of the Russian answers was in all mouths, and Prince Gortchakoff was the idol of the moment, so much so, indeed, that there were some ill-natured persons who hinted rather loudly that the Emperor was growing a little jealous of his Minister's popularity, and that there had been one or two evil quarters of hours. I am not sure that I was not the witness of one myself. It was at a great party where the Emperor was playing cards. The Prince went up to His Majesty with a very low bow; the Emperor turned sharp round upon him, showing all his teeth, literally, with the growl of an angry lion, and the poor old gentleman's discomfiture was not pleasant to behold. Many people, of course, saw the affair, and it was much discussed in *salons* and *chancelleries*.

The first time that I saw Prince Gortchakoff come into a drawing-room I looked round for Mr. Winkle, Mr. Tracy Tupman and the poet Snodgrass, for here was Mr. Pickwick in person. Barring the white kerseymere smalls and the black gaiters, the likeness was complete. The round, good-humoured face, very pink and white, thin grey hair, eyes beaming rays of human kindness out of a pair of gold-rimmed spectacles, a most genial smile, the perfection of good manners, pleasant to everybody—altogether a most engaging personality. Small wonder that St. Petersburg loved him not only for his great qualities, but also for his small foibles, for did not these give endless opportunities to Tutcheff, the Sydney Smith of Russia? Vanity was always said to be the Prince's strongest weakness. One night, at a dinner at which I was present, the talk turned upon the three famous despatches. Somebody said:

"Lorsque le Prince Gortchakoff veut se procurer un vrai plaisir il fait venir un de ses secrétaires pour lui lire ses trois dépêches.

Alors il se jette dans un fauteuil, ferme les yeux, et a tout l'air d'un homme qui——"

"Effectivement," interrupted Tutcheff. "C'est le Narcisse qui se mire dans son encrier."

The fun of the thing was that everybody knew that, although of course the despatches represented his policy, he had not written a word of them. They were drafted by a certain M. Katakazy, a very clever writer, who was afterwards Minister at Washington, whence, for some reason or other, he was recalled, and so far as I know, disappeared. At all events we heard no more of him.

On one occasion, before the Washington mission, the Prince, who, moved by some caprice, had wished to get rid of Katakazy, sent for him and told him that he thought the time had come when he should send him abroad. Katakazy, who did not wish to go, and who could play upon his chief as Paganini could upon a Stradivarius, thanked him warmly, and expressed his joy at being given the opportunity of telling the world how great was the man whom he had had the honour to serve so long as secretary. The Prince chortled and said, in his purring way: "Well, perhaps I should miss your cleverness, so you had better stay."

There was another claim to renown which M. Katakazy possessed—one of which he was perhaps even more proud than he was of that of being the champion despatch writer and protocolist of the Russian Foreign Office. All of us who knew our Paris in the late fifties and early sixties (alas!) remember the famous waiter in the Café de la Rotonde whose "*Boum!*" in answer to the cry of "*Garçon!*" rolled out in a deep bass voice that made all the cups and saucers and spoons and glasses rattle on the marble tables, made the fortune of the "patron" of the establishment. His fame lives, for our beloved Du Maurier has celebrated him in his masterpiece "Trilby." M. Katakazy's mimicry of this hero was the delight of St. Petersburg. He had, moreover, a very handsome wife, and that is always an asset for a diplomatist and private secretary.

Here is another of the Prince's harmless little vainglorious speeches. One day he called at the British Embassy with his son Michel, whom he presented to Lady Napier in the following words:

"Permettez, Madame, que je vous présente le brûlot que je viens de lancer dans le monde."

Poor little *brûlot!* destined neither to set the Thames nor the Neva on fire!

As the Prince was a widower, a lady who was a relation of his, used to do the honours for him at his parties, and she had her private apartments in his official residence. This lady had a great friend, an officer in one of the Guards' regiments. One evening, when Prince Gortchakoff had a great official banquet, Tutcheff, who was one of the guests, as he drove up to the grand entrance saw this officer being admitted at the private door. As he reached the drawing-room, he heard the Prince making the lady's excuses for not being present. "Figurez-vous son désespoir! Elle est retenue chez elle par une affreuse migraine." "Ah, oui!" said Tutcheff the cruel, "je l'ai vue, sa migraine, qui montait chez elle au moment où je descendais de mon traineau." Of course the story was all over the town the next morning.

The pleasantest *salon* of St. Petersburg in my day was that of Princess Kotchoubey. Her palace, the Dom Belaselski, had what I should think must be the finest staircase of any private house in the world. The guest-rooms were furnished with a magnificence which made one open one's eyes very wide indeed. In one of the smaller and more intimate rooms the Princess used to sit every evening, dispensing tea to a small *coterie* of friends, essentially a political assemblage, hardly ever more than a dozen. Prince Gortchakoff was almost always there; Lord Napier and one or two of the ambassadors very often. Admission to this very choice gathering was a privilege much coveted and rarely attained; I gained it by the grace and favour of Countess Apponyi, the Austrian Ambassadress in London, who was Princess Kotchoubey's sister, and gave me a letter for her, to which I have already alluded, and which stood me in good stead, for it turned out to be a passport to all that was most distinguished in Russian society.

One evening Prince Gortchakoff brought Khalil Bey (afterwards Khalil Pasha), the Turkish Ambassador, to present him to the Princess. A great lady present, who could be very haughty and,

indeed, insolent when she chose, put on her most Lady Disdain air, and said in her pretty sing-song French :

" Je suppose, Monsieur l'Ambassadeur, que vous avez été bien frappé de tout ce que vous avez vu ici."

" Mais de quoi donc, Madame ? "

" De notre belle ville, de nos quais, de nos palais, de toute notre civilisation, enfin."

" Mais non, Madame," answered the witty Turk, who was Tutcheff's rival in repartee. " Vous savez qu'en Turquie nous sommes aussi excessivement arriérés," with the sweetest smile he sat down and drank a triumphant cup of tea. But the lady was not so happy ; she had attacked the wrong man.

Khalil Bey was always amusing, but sometimes his wit was apt to be a little cruel. There was a certain Madame R. K., known as La Vénus Tartare, an extraordinarily beautiful woman of the Kalmuck type, with the figure of a Juno. She had brought out a book called " Un Hiver à Paris," which she had persuaded Théophile Gautier, Madame Georges Sand and one other French man of letters (I. think my old friend Octave Feuillet) to write for her in collaboration, she publishing it as her own, though she had not penned a word of it. Everybody knew this, but that did not raise a blush in her, and it came out with, as a frontispiece, a photograph of Madame R. K.'s back, *décolleté* almost down to the waist. She was good enough to send me a copy of it, and I went to thank her. As we were sitting discussing the book, who should be announced but the Turkish Ambassador.

" Ah," said Madame R. K., " nous parlions justement de mon livre. L'avez-vous lu ? "

" Non, Madame !—et vous ? " was Khalil Bey's biting answer, uttered with the demurest face of innocence ; but the so-called Bulgarian atrocities of his countrymen in later years were not more barbarously searching. I felt so sorry for the poor beautiful Vénus Tartare.

CHAPTER XI

THE WINTER OF 1863–4

THERE is an old saying and a true one, that in Russia you see the winter and in Italy you feel it. In the one case the houses are so beautifully warmed and so many precautions are taken, that men can laugh at the climate; in Italy, on the other hand, the equipment is all for summer, and winter may torture as it pleases.

In St. Petersburg the year 1863 died a glorious death. The month of December was brilliant and we "saw the winter" in all its beauty. Two or three blizzards had brought the roads into ideal condition. Smoothly and noiselessly the sledges flew over the white velvet of the yet undefiled virgin snow; the crisp air was full of energy generously dispensed; the cheery cries of the fat coachmen, made still fatter by the padding under their heavy furs, their beards frozen stiff and stark; the tinkling bell-music of the Orloff trotters; the monotonous chants of the *mujiks* sitting in their sleigh-carts; the sparkling city hung with festoons of ice-opals flashing back the glory of the short-lived winter sun; great ladies dashing past in their *troikas*, nothing to be seen of any one of them but just a little pink nose peeping out of the muffling sea-otter furs and sables; the glittering shops full of customers choosing *étrennes*—everybody busy and eager, making ready to speed the parting, welcome the coming year.

Far away in the ice-bound morasses of Lithuania, in the gloomy forests of Poland, there might still be here and there the crack of a rifle, some desultory fighting, some hunting of rebels and murderers instead of wolves and bears; but the capital of Peter

the Great was deaf and blind to all tragedy. There could be no gayer city in the world; certainly none where the foreign diplomatists were so hospitably treated; our lives were a round of festivities in the very home of joyous revelry.

In the daytime, on those rare occasions when we were not busy at the Embassy, there were skating parties, picnics to the Islands, and the chance of breaking our necks on the Montagnes Russes. The gardens of the Tauride, which were reserved for the Imperial Family and a few—very few—grandees, were open to us. In the evening we dined and danced and supped and danced again. The opera and the French Théâtre Michel were a perfect blaze of jewels, smart dresses, the masterpieces of Paris, brilliant uniforms and decorations; the black coats of Ambassadors and civilian Ministers sprinkled here and there the only sad notes.

On the 12th of January I was invited by Princess Kotchoubey to "await the new year," which, of course, is, according to the old style, our 13th. Curiously enough, the old style was observed even in the English Church, so that the Christmas Day services were held on the 7th of January, according to our reckoning. I have told elsewhere of the magnificence of the Princess' palace, but this entertainment quite exceeded anything that I had ever seen or heard of. There were only about fifty guests, but these were all the chief personages of St. Petersburg, including Prince Gortchakoff, who, as was his wont, appropriated to himself the youngest and prettiest lady present, for the old Vice-Chancellor was a great flirt. He was not yet Chancellor, for at the death of Count Nesselrode in March, 1862, the Tsar would not fill the office. His Majesty was reported to have said that "Nesselrode was one thing, Gortchakoff another." This was a great mortification to the Prince, and gave occasion to some wit for the saying, that Prince Gortchakoff was the man of the most virtuous inclinations in the whole Empire, "parcequ'il cherche toujours à se débarrasser de son Vice." Another great celebrity who was present was Count Schuvaloff, the grand marshal of the Court, a noble old man, the father of Count Peter Schuvaloff who was afterwards Ambassador in London and with Prince Gortchakoff represented Russia at the Congress of Berlin.

On the stroke of midnight came a procession of gorgeous footmen, bearing trays with glasses filled with champagne, and we all clinked our goblets together, drinking prosperity to the New Year. Then followed a pretty old Russian custom. Every guest went up to the hostess and kissed her hand, and she went through the form of pretending to kiss each of her friends on the forehead in return. It seemed a pity not to carry out so graceful and picturesque a tradition in its entirety. But though Princess Kotchoubey did no more than bow over her guests' foreheads as they stooped to kiss her hand, her reception of them was grace itself. She was a Queen in her palace, and we, her subjects for the nonce, did willing homage to her.

It seemed little short of a miracle to step out of the iron grip of a Russian New Year's Eve into a fairyland in which all the treasures of the world were sampled—the diamonds of Golconda, the rubies of Burmah, the turquoises of Persia, pearls from the Eastern Seas, tapestries of the Gobelins, gold and silver masterpieces of famous Florentine and French artists, flowers and fruit of June and July, the warmth of summer with not a fire to be seen, lighted up by myriads of candles disposed in a way of which Russia alone seemed to have the secret. And in all this magnificence there was only one tiny omission, one little blot to remind us that we were human, and that humanity is imperfect: there were no salt-spoons!

After supper I had some talk with Prince Gortchakoff, who was always very kind to me, and often used to come up and have a little chat when we met in society. We naturally talked about the New Year's Day festivities, and he went on to expatiate on the religiosity of the Russian mind, and how to every man in the country Russia was *Holy* Russia.

He said that few people knew how deeply this feeling was ingrained in the minds of the *mujiks*, to whom it was a horror to think that they might be buried anywhere but in their own country. He gave as an instance of this the case of a Russian who, when the Prince was Secretary of Legation in London, was coachman in the service of the Duke of Devonshire. The man asked for him one day at the Legation. On the Prince inquiring what he

wanted, he said that he wanted to go back home. "What!" said the Prince, "leave so good a place and so good a master. Of what have you to complain?" The man said, "Of nothing—but I am afraid lest I should die here and be buried out of Holy Russia." So close was his attachment to the sacred soil that though there was no other cause for nostalgia, and he was perfectly happy where he was, he must go home for fear of this terrible thing happening. It reminded one of the Chinese travelling to California with their coffins for the return journey to the Middle Kingdom. These things make a man think.

Three days afterwards, to my great surprise, I was invited by the Prince to a great diplomatic dinner at which all the Ambassadors and Ministers were present, with certain members of the Government. There were no ladies invited.

Of course the conversation turned chiefly upon the Danish question, which was reaching a very acute stage. When the time to leave arrived, Prince Gortchakoff detained Lord Napier with the Prussian, Austrian, Swedish and French representatives for a private conference.

I am not a resurrectionist and find little relish in digging among the graves of dead questions. The disputes over the Danish duchies are long since dead and buried, though the ambitions of the men who lit the torch of war still live, and the torch is still blazing. Those disputes were the opportunity of one master mind, the puzzle of others, and the joy of many dullard diplomatists who loved to flounder choking among the shoals and whirlpools of a sea of troubles; at that time, they were the despair of those slaves of the pen, of whom I, so long as I was at the Foreign Office, was one, whose task it was to cover reams upon reams of foolscap with reports of endless conversations with Princekins and Ministers at small German courts, retailed by minor diplomatic lights with all the ineptitude of pompous verbosity.

The Governments which really played a part in the wrangles were those of France, Russia, Prussia and in a lesser degree Austria, which, though very half-hearted, was not for the last time being towed by Prussia *im schlepptau*, as a German publicist put it. She was dragged in by the fear of losing in the Diet an influence which

had already been seriously undermined, if not exploded, by Bismarck.

The real arbiter in the case was England. Upon the conduct of England depended the issues of peace or war. Unfortunately her course was being steered by a pilot unskilled, fickle, timid and obstinately vain; a man who, as the conduct of the Polish question had shown, undeterred by more than one sordid repulse, was full of brag and bluster, till the critical moment should come—then collapsing like a soap-bubble. It was their appreciation of Lord Russell that made foreign statesmen tremble for the fate of Denmark, nor was it long before this want of faith in him was fully justified.

In the case of the Danish duchies question, as in the case of the Polish insurrection, in order rightly to understand what was taking place at St. Petersburg, it is well to consider for a moment what was the condition of international affairs. We may leave to those who are curious in such political puzzles the complicated intrigues which now have only an academic or historic interest.

The question of the incorporation of Schleswig, its unity with Holstein, the position of the infinitesimally small Duchy of Lauenburg, the great language dispute and the so-called "wrongs" of the Schleswigers and the Holsteiners, together with the claims of the Duke of Augustenburg—all these are ghosts long since laid; they were never anything more than pretexts, nor can anything else be said of Prussia's plea that her hand was being forced by the small German States; it is enough for the politician of to-day to know what was the true objective of the war; that question still lives with us, growing in importance every day. Had the duchies lain inland, far away from the coast, the right to their possession would never have disturbed Europe. Kiel was the Naboth's vineyard—Kiel with the seaboard of the Baltic, and the North Sea—Kiel with the possibility of a German military and commercial Navy. That, as we shall see presently, is an incontrovertible fact; we have it out of the mouths of German statesmen themselves—out of the mouth of Lord Palmerston.

The glorious dream of the nationalist party in Prussia was a United Fatherland, strong by sea as by land, taking its place

at the council board of Europe as a Power of the first magnitude. Until she should have a navy fitted to cope with that of any other nation, this was a position which Germany could not hope to hold. This planet of ours is so built that in many cases the sea determines the possession of the land and the power of states. By land Prussia was already strong indeed, as she was soon to prove in 1866 and 1870. At sea she did not exist. She had practically no seaboard, for what is a seaboard lacking harbours? So long as this want remained there must be many international questions in which the voice of Germany would be of no account. Kiel would solve the difficulty—it was foredoomed, and indeed the project of a new Suez Canal, since realized, was already in the air.

There is a curious letter of the old Kaiser William when he was Prince of Prussia, written to his cousin, Prince Adalbert of Prussia, on the 16th of August, 1853—curious when we compare what was with what is:

> "How sorry I was to miss you yesterday in order to give you a few pieces of information which Steinäcker (his aide-de-camp) told me you wished for, and to tell you something of the grand naval review. You will have heard all details by now. What a pity that you could not hit it off! *I cannot tell you how great was my emotion, especially when for the first time I passed by our ship, saw our battle-flag, our uniform and Pickelhaube (helmet) and heard our drums on board a man of war*"* (the italics are mine), "and that too in the middle of an English Fleet! The visit of the Queen on board the *Gefion* was too friendly and gracious. I was delighted with the ships, and found our soldiers making a goodly show."*

The occasion was the great naval review held by Queen Victoria on the 11th of August, 1853, off Spithead, at which the Prince of Prussia was present. The words which I have underlined are significant. The sight of *a* German man-of-war would now hardly be a novelty creating so great emotion!

* "Briefe Kaiser Wilhelm's des Ersten," Insel Verlag, Leipzig, 1911, 106.

The position of the three Powers, England, France and Russia, which might have combined to save Denmark and defeat the ambitious efforts of Germany, was peculiar. Louis Napoléon had proposed a congress to consider the affairs of Europe, and having been snubbed by Lord Russell, was sulking in his tent. In Russia there was certainly no desire for war; the memory of the Crimea was still fresh in men's minds, the Polish business was not yet settled, and the country was longing for quiet—according to Prince Gortchakoff's famous *mot*, "La Russie ne boude pas, elle se recueille," but a marriage had recently been arranged between the Tsarevitch* and the Princess Dagmar, the second daughter of the King of Denmark, so the Court (which at that time was still Russia), with Prince Gortchakoff, eager for an English alliance, and a great number of ministers and nobles, were strong partisans of the Danes; and the whole chivalry of the country would have donned its armour to do battle for the father of their future Empress.

They only waited for England. As to the attitude of England there should have been no doubt. The declaration of her statesmen had been explicit, showing not only their sense of an injustice which was to be perpetrated, but beyond that a right knowledge of the real objects which Bismarck had at heart. The national party in Germany made no secret of them. Two quotations taken from Lord Salisbury's article in the *Quarterly Review* of January, 1864, are clear in their testimony. There was a debate on the Danish Question in the Prussian Chamber on the 1st of December, 1864. Herr von Twesten, Chairman of the Committee appointed to consider the Augustenburg claims, made the following candid remark:

> "The Duchies are for Germany and Prussia a strong bulwark under all circumstances against any attack coming from the North. This, as well as their maritime position, are advantages which Prussia can never relinquish."

* The Grand Duke Nicholas Alexandrovitch, the eldest son of the Tsar. He was in wretched health and died in April, 1865, and the Princess became betrothed to his next brother, who after his father's murder reigned as Alexander the Third.

Dr. Loewe, a conspicuous man in the National Verein, speaks with even less affectation of concealment:

> "What interest has Prussia in the maintenance of the London Protocol? (The Treaty of 1852 by which the Powers, including Prussia, settled the succession to the Danish throne.) Since the time of the Great Elector, Prussian policy has always been rightly directed towards gaining the North German Peninsula for Germany."

The North German Peninsula! Look at the map and then say whether any more arrogant pretension was ever brought forward in a national Parliament. Lord Salisbury was not the only Englishman who knew what were the motives urging on Germany. Lord Palmerston, at the end of the session of 1863, spoke plainly on the subject. Mr. Seymour Fitzgerald, who had been Conservative Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, had asked a question in the House of Commons as to what was the policy of Her Majesty's Government in regard to the Danish Question—Lord Palmerston's answer was as follows:

> "There is no use in disguising the fact that what is at the bottom of the German design, and the desire of connecting Schleswig with Holstein, is the dream of a German fleet and the wish to get Kiel as a German seaport. That may be a good reason why they should wish it; but it is no reason why they should violate the rights and independence of Denmark for an object which, even if it were accomplished, would not realize the expectation of those who aim at it. The hon. gentleman asks what is the policy and course of Her Majesty's Government with regard to that dispute.
>
> "As I have already said, we concur entirely with him, and I am satisfied, with all reasonable men in Europe, including those in France and Russia, in desiring that the independence and integrity and the rights of Denmark may be maintained. We are convinced, I am convinced at least, that if any violent attempt were made to overthrow those rights and interfere

with that independence, those who made the attempt would find in the result that it would not be Denmark alone with which they would have to contend."

Could language be clearer than this pronouncement *urbi et orbi* of the Prime Minister of England? But that was not all. Lord Russell in despatch after despatch, many of which are quoted by Lord Salisbury in his famous article, gave it to be understood at Paris, Berlin, Vienna and St. Petersburg that an attack on Denmark would lead to a rupture of relations between England and Germany. "Her Majesty could not see with indifference a military occupation of Holstein," etc. "Should it appear that Federal troops had entered the Duchy on international grounds, Her Majesty's Government may be obliged to interfere."

To Count Bernstorff, the Prussian Ambassador in London, Lord Russell said, "that Her Majesty's Government could not wonder that the King of Denmark was ready to defend Schleswig and to consider its hostile occupation as a fatal blow to the integrity of his dominions. But I could not doubt that he would be assisted by Powers friendly to Denmark in that defence . . . I said that since the month of May, Great Britain had warned Austria of these dangers, that Russia and Germany had likewise been warned, but that the voice of England was unheeded," etc., etc. Acting on instructions from the Foreign Secretary, Lord Napier told Prince Gortchakoff that "the pressing necessity for arresting warlike preparations, and combining the Powers less directly interested in the controversy for a mediation, was proved by the fact that an attack upon Schleswig seemed imminent, and that if that attempt was made it seemed not improbable that the Germans might find themselves confronted by the armed intervention of Great Britain."

It was not "the voice of England" that was unheeded, as Lord Russell put it, but his own. He was like Bottom the weaver, "Let me play the lion too; I will roar that I will do any man's heart good to hear me; I will roar that I will make the Duke say, 'Let him roar again, let him roar again.'" Then lest he should frighten the Duchess and the ladies—"I will aggravate

my voice so that I will roar you as gently as any sucking dove ; I will roar you an 'twere any nightingale."

The publication by the French Foreign Office of the report by M. Reinack of the Commission charged to inquire into " Les Origines Diplomatiques de la Guerre de 1870 " has thrown a flood of light upon the negotiations which took place in regard to the Danish Question of 1863–4 ; it is not pleasant reading for Englishmen ; a review of the first two volumes of these revelations in the *Figaro* of the 6th of September, 1910, by the Comte d'Haussonville shows the position to which England had fallen in the Councils of Europe. " L'Angleterre s'agite " (this is, of course, the historic present), " mais ce n'est pas un Dieu qui la mène. Ce n'est personne. On ne sent point, comme à certains moments de son histoire, la main ferme d'un véritable homme d'état : au début du dix-neuvième siècle un Pitt ; à la fin un Disraeli qui sait ce qu'il se propose et où il veut conduire son pays."

Nobody was frightened by Lord Russell's roaring, least of all Bismarck—he knew how soon the voice would be " aggravated." " L'Angleterre ne fera pas la guerre," he said to M. de Talleyrand, the French Ambassador at Berlin. Foreign statesmen knew that Lord Palmerston was now grown old. He was no longer the doughty champion of the Don Pacifico days, when he electrified the House of Commons and the world with the famous *Civis Romanus sum* speech ; moreover, he was hampered by the shufflings of his Foreign Secretary, and in the background was the Queen, never a negligible quantity in foreign affairs, whom all men knew to be a strong ally of Germany, and who, still animated by the spirit of the dead Prince Consort, naturally felt with Germany. Read what the Prince Consort wrote to the King of Prussia on the 12th March, 1861 : " My hope, like that of most German patriots, rests upon Prussia, rests upon you " (" Life of the Prince Consort," Vol. V., p. 314). Those words in the mouth of the Prince were intelligible enough, but why should Lord Russell be a German patriot ?

And so we drifted, whither we knew not, though others did. M. de Massignac, a clever diplomatist, a man whom I knew well,

who was French Chargé d'Affaires at St. Petersburg, on the 9th of February, 1864, sent a despatch to M. Drouyn de Lhuys in which he recorded certain confidential talks which he had had with some of his German colleagues upon the situation. He urged that if the Duchies were to unite themselves with Prussia, it would be unwise for France to interfere, because such a territorial extension would enable Germany to create a navy, which in given circumstances might unite with the fleets of the other Continental Powers to destroy England's preponderant power at sea! ("Origines Diplomatiques," etc.).

Meanwhile, England and Prussia were both courting Louis Napoléon. Palmerston expressed to the Prince de la Tour d'Auvergne, the French Ambassador in London, his regret that Great Britain and France could not come to a complete understanding, but Lord Russell kept the same Ambassador in a state of mystification. Bismarck, on the other hand, was maintaining such intimate relations with M. de Talleyrand as to draw from Drouyn de Lhuys the warmest congratulations. The Emperor stroked his *barbiche* and held the balance. Poor Emperor! It was for him that the witches' cauldron was bubbling.

And Denmark? In the Spring of 1863, King Frederic the Seventh had died, and King Christian, the father of our Queen Alexandra, ruled in his stead. Seldom has a monarch been called to the throne in more untoward circumstances. Only eleven years had passed since all the great Powers—Prussia and Austria, of course, included—gathered together in conclave in London, had solemnly bound themselves to guarantee the integrity of his dominions.

Such engagements we are now told by the German Chancellor are "scraps of paper!" Only eleven years! It was no archaic instrument which the decay of many decades had rendered obsolete. What had occurred in the meantime to make it invalid? Nothing, absolutely nothing! Yet in spite of the most sacred obligations of the Powers which had pledged themselves to maintain his succession and the rights of his kingdom, two of those very Powers were invading his country to despoil him of his territory, and the rest treacherously and cowardly deserted him. It was a cruel

betrayal, and as if to accentuate it by a stroke of bitter irony, France sent General Fleury, the Emperor's confidential friend, England Lord Wodehouse, on special missions to congratulate the new King on his accession. Fleury, the dandy courtier, passing through Berlin, was handsomely flattered and fooled by Bismarck; Lord Wodehouse carried pouches full of excellent advice from Lord Russell—advice the neglect of which King Christian was assured might lead to dire consequences. The King acted according to Lord Russell's advice, but none the less, when the great catastrophe came, he was left to his fate.

Such, briefly sketched, was the position of the Danish negotiations at the end of 1863 and the beginning of 1864. The details can easily be filled in from our own Blue Books, from Lord Salisbury's masterly essays, and from the "Origines Diplomatiques de la Guerre de 1870." I have only tried to say so much as should serve to make intelligible what follows.

It must have been about the 9th or 10th of February: I did not note the exact date in my papers: a cruel blizzard, cruel even for St. Petersburg, lasting many hours, had swept the streets clear of all passenger traffic. Only the direst necessity would goad men to face it. As good luck would have it, there was for a wonder no function or entertainment that night, so I hugged my comfort in my rooms and went to bed early, thinking with a sense of superiority tempered by pity of the poor wretches who must be outside wrestling with the bitterness of the weather. Hardly had I laid myself down when there came a violent knocking at my outer door. My servant had long since gone home, so there was nothing for it but to get up and see what was the matter. It was the Chancery messenger, shivering and smothered from head to foot with snow, bringing me a note from my chief, Lord Napier: "Please come at once."

I went back into my bedroom and dressed again, looking regretfully at my warm bed, in which only a few minutes earlier I had been pitying the victims of whom now I was to be one. When I got outside I was almost blinded by the snow, driven by a wind which it was hard to stand against. It seemed more than doubtful whether I should be able to reach the Embassy, which was about

half a mile off. All at once, out of the unwholesome, yellow, almost lurid darkness my good angel sent a belated Isvoshtchik crawling along, visible only a few yards off. I hailed him, hardly hoping that he would come to my call; however, the promise of a good *pour-boire* tempted him, and we crept miserably through the storm to the Embassy. I never was out in so weird a night. As I left the little sleigh I shook off many pounds' weight of snow from fur cap and coat.

I found Lord Napier walking about his room in his dressing-gown, evidently rather uneasy; he seemed to have a sort of fore-warning of something out of the common and disagreeable. A telegraphic despatch in cypher had come in, and he wished to have it deciphered immediately. It was truly a momentous document —nothing less than an instruction to call upon Prince Gortchakoff at once and to let him know that England would not interfere on behalf of Denmark. Lord Napier was eagerly watching over my shoulder as one by one the fateful words revealed themselves, and when the telegram was fully before us we looked at one another in dismay.

"But," said my chief, "only yesterday when I saw the Prince I told him that I believed that there was no change in the policy of Her Majesty's Government, and now I have to give him this message. It is very embarrassing! Where is the Prince? Do you know?"

"He is at Tsarskoe Selo," I answered.

"Well, I shall have to go out by the first train to-morrow morning."

It was a very awkward moment for Lord Napier and he felt the falseness of the position acutely, but he was so truly attached to Lord Russell personally that he never would say a word against him.

The next day I was in the Chancery when Lord Napier came back from Tsarskoe Selo. He beckoned me into his private room.

"Well," I asked, "what did the Prince say?"

"It was not a pleasant interview," answered my chief. "When the Prince had read the telegram he folded it up and handed it back to me, saying, 'Alors, milord, je mets de côté la supposition que

l'Angleterre fasse jamais la guerre pour une question d'honneur.' Pretty words for an English Ambassador to listen to ! "

Lord Napier was deeply moved, as well he might be. They were indeed " pretty words," and in them, I think, we may see what lay at the bottom of Prince Gortchakoff's subsequent foreign policy—especially in Central Asia—until he was finally checkmated by Lord Beaconsfield, at the Berlin Congress in 1878. On that morning of February, 1864, the Prince's well-known keenness for an alliance with England died the death ; in his estimation England need no longer be taken into account.

Bismarck had now a free hand. His carefully laid schemes, of which the war in the Duchies was only an instalment, were all to bear their fruit. Austria was to be crippled, France to be humbled and dismembered, Germany to be a naval Power of the first magnitude. And England ?

That is how the keel of the first Dreadnought was laid at St. Petersburg in the month of February, 1864. The Baltic and the North Sea are united as Siamese twins. Germany, possessed of ports and a huge navy, is straining every nerve to wrest the trident from the hands of Great Britain, and the tragedy of 1914, which sooner or later was bound to come, is even now upon us. Black is the ingratitude of mankind ! There is no statue of Lord Russell, the great benefactor, the true founder of the German navy, standing unter den Linden in Berlin.

CHAPTER XII

THROUGH THE WINTER

HAPPILY our life at the Embassy was not all made up of political miscarriages and diplomatic rebuffs. On the 6th (18th) of January we all received a summons to attend the ceremony of the blessing of the waters.

For some days past a little shrine of green wood had been in process of construction on the side of the Neva opposite the Winter Palace; a picture of a saint surmounted it on each side, the place of honour being assigned to the image of St. John the Baptist. As soon as daylight broke on the 6th vast crowds of people of both sexes, soldiers in many uniforms, and, of course, as at all public ceremonies, dogs, were flocking to catch as near a sight as possible of the shrine.

We, the Corps Diplomatique, were bidden to the Winter Palace at noon. The drive through the streets was fascinating. The weather was glorious and the glistening city was at its brightest, the soldiers in all their bravery giving a kaleidoscopic glamour to the surging mob, mostly clad in sad-coloured sheepskins with the wool inside. The wild-looking Georgians in their native dress, Cossacks of the Don, fierce, swarthy horsemen from the Caucasus in their shirts of mail and shining armour, striking a medieval note in the concert of men. The Kurnos regiment of the Emperor Paul, every man with a snub nose, and wearing the old peaked brazen shako of our Guards in Queen Anne's reign, each shako showing a bullet hole in it, a memorial of a bullet which, aimed at the Tsar, found its billet in the tall cap of one of his faithful, snub-nosed guardsmen, who dashed forward just in time to save the Tsar's life at the expense of his own; in contrast to these were the grenadiers, with heavy

bearskin caps and plumes. The *chevalier-gardes* in white tunics, their helmets and cuirasses dazzling in the winter sun—all the panoply of war set in the flaming glory of ecclesiastical and imperial splendour. Could this be Europe in the nineteenth century?

From the room in the Palace in which we had assembled we were ushered off to a side entrance to see the priestly procession form to meet the Tsar. It was an imposing ceremony. The air was heavy with the penetrating fumes of incense, and in the distance we could hear the mysterious effect of the deep bass voices of the priests and deacons—those wonderful bass voices for which they are chosen—chanting the impressive litanies of the Greek Church. Nearer and nearer they came, the music becoming clearer and more distinct, but intensely reverential, until at last the great procession of Church dignitaries passed before us; it was stirringly solemn.

Priests in red, priests in purple, priests in white, and priests in violet, all as resplendent as a profusion of gold embroidery and jewels could make them—very imposing with their long white beards and hair. One deacon, a giant in stature, with hair and beard reaching half-way down to his waist, had a deep voice which, pealing through the corridors like the rolling* notes of a bass trombone, made the windows rattle again. Last of all came the Bishops and the Metropolitan, like the King's daughter "all glorious within," clad in raiment that made them seem like a vision out of the Apocalypse. Altogether a sight not to be forgotten.

We followed the procession through the great State apartments of the Palace, each room with a guard of honour from a different regiment, until the priests and bishops branched off to one of the principal staircases to go round the Palace; and when next we saw them they were accompanied by the Tsar, looking magnificent on a grey charger, followed by his brothers and sons, and a brilliantly mounted staff of the chief officials. Of the ceremony itself we could see nothing. It consists in the dipping of a cross by the Tsar into the water, through a hole made in the ice, and during the liturgy which follows, and lasts for a quarter of an hour, all the people, including the soldiers, remain uncovered. Even the Tsar must bare

* Winterbottom, the great trombone player, once said to me, "The notes of a G trombone ought to go *rolling* through Exeter Hall like footballs."

his head, so the late Emperor, who was bald, used to wear a wig for the occasion. It was luckily not very cold, but there was a keen wind blowing, and I am bound to say that the thermometer is a bad judge of temperature at St. Petersburg, for the wind is man's worst enemy, and the days when the mercury is at its lowest are far more tolerable than those on which there are a few degrees of frost and biting blasts that race down the river. Happily we diplomatists had two stout glass windows between us and the weather, so we had no cause to complain.

As soon as the waters had been duly blessed, and the service was over, out burst a cannonade from the fortress and from guns placed at regular intervals on the opposite bank of the Neva; then the Emperor and his staff mounted their horses and wended their way back, the priests carrying the blessed water and sprinkling the troops with it as they passed in front of them. The Empress being ill and unable to attend the ceremony, a golden goblet was filled with the water and carried to her for her use.

We were all invited to luncheon, and after that there was a review of the Imperial Guards, thirty-four thousand men and eighty-four pieces of cannon; a quite magnificent display.

As soon as the blessing of the waters and the review were finished, the mujiks were all allowed access to the consecrated hole in the ice. Into this they dipped themselves, fully clothed, to the end that they might purify themselves from the excesses of their holidays—more particularly from the sin of wearing masks, which, being forbidden by their religion, is one in which the orthodox take a special delight. Dripping icicles, but pure, and of a contented conscience, the mujik rushes from his freezing bath to his poor home, there to work, and, as soon as Lent comes, starve, till Easter shall set him free once more.

If all that one hears be true, the Russia of to-day is very different from what it was at the time of which I am writing. The great hospitable houses are, so I am told, many of them shut up. The Winter Palace itself is no longer the setting of pageants and festivities of which the slaves of the ring and the lamp might have been the stage-managers and chamberlains. Misfortune, sorrow and cruel anxieties have racked the Imperial Family, and the gaiety of a

nation has been eclipsed. One can but hope that it may be only a passing eclipse, only a temporary cloud, through which in years to come the sun may shine more brightly than before.* It was radiant in my day.

It would be difficult to imagine anything more sumptuous than a great Court ball. There were one thousand eight hundred guests, themselves all as brilliant as the glory of diamonds and rubies and pearls and the most magnificent uniforms could make them. The great white and gold ball-room, with an orchestra at each end, flanked by arches leading into a winter garden rich in palms and tree-ferns and flowers and all the wonders of tropical vegetation, was lighted by twenty-seven thousand candles arranged spirally round the pillars and in crystal chandeliers.

The Corps Diplomatique were ushered into the adjoining drawing-rooms, where they were received by old Count Ribeaupierre, the *grand maître de la Cour*, himself a notable link with the past, for he had been page of honour to the Empress Catherine. Presently the doors were thrown open and the Imperial family trooped in; the Emperor as usual very regal, half a head taller than any man in the room, wearing a white hussar uniform trimmed with gold and black sables; the Empress covered with the spoils of Ophir and Golconda. They went round our circle, stopping to speak to the chiefs of missions and their wives. It was a lesson to watch that gracious Lady and the winning way in which she made her guests welcome with a charm that could only come from the sweetest nature. When the little reception was over we followed Their Majesties into the ball-room. It really was a dazzling sight. At a given moment all the one thousand eight hundred guests sat down to supper at the same time; only the Emperor remained standing, himself looking after the comfort of his guests.

An entertainment even more wonderful, on account of its exquisite daintiness, was a smaller ball of only about three hundred and fifty guests; it led, moreover, to some amusing incidents. The order from the Court was that civilians were not to wear uniform, so with two brilliant exceptions, the diplomatic body arrived as black as rooks. The brilliant two were General Cassius Clay and the Duc

* Written some years ago (1915).

d'Osuna, the Spanish Ambassador, who, conceiving themselves to be soldiers, took it for granted that the order did not apply to them; the General especially was full of military ardour as regarded his clothes, so he came in a nondescript blue coat, a yellow nankeen waistcoat, white trousers and something in his hand which he said was a forage-cap. The Duc d'Osuna, on the other hand, appeared in a gorgeous uniform, his breast plastered all over with stars and decorations (the only wonder being that he did not wear some on his back as well), his little legs incased in white leather breeches and jack-boots. He was a great character and really a very charming personality; fabulously rich, an ambassador without pay, he hospitably kept open house for his staff, even when he was on leave. His many châteaux were maintained in the same sumptuous way, whether he were in Spain or abroad, ready to receive him at any moment, and so, while his agents accumulated good fortunes, when his death came he was reputed to have well-nigh run through everything. The ship had too many leaks. He was several times over grandee of Spain, and so had the right to wear any number of hats in the presence of his sovereign. He is alluded to in Lord Beaconsfield's letter to his sister, giving an account of Queen Victoria's coronation. "He is a great dandy, and looks like Philip the Second, but though the only living descendant of the Borgias, he has the reputation of being very amiable. When he was last at Paris he attended a representation of Victor Hugo's *Lucrezia Borgia*. She says in one of the scenes: '*Great crimes are in our blood.*' All his friends looked at him with an expression of fear. '*But the blood has degenerated,*' he said, '*for I have committed only weaknesses.*'"

The dear little man's great foible was vanity, concentrated in the admiration of his own tiny Spanish feet. "Oh! moi," said a little French actress one evening. "Quand j'ai besoin de deux ou trois cents roubles, je m'en vais trouver le Duc d'Osuna; je lui fais un doigt de cour et je lui dis, en regardant ses pieds: 'Ah! comme ils sont jolis! Il n'y a que Monsieur le Duc d'Osuna pour avoir ces pieds-là—sont-ils assez mignons!' Cela ne rate jamais."

Another order that evening was, that there was to be no ceremony as to going in to supper. We were to go as we pleased and

with whom we pleased. Precedence was abolished for the night. We danced in the white drawing-room; towards midnight the heavy folding doors were thrown open, and in what had been the great ball-room of a few nights before was laid out quite the most artistically perfect banquet that could be imagined—once more the Jins of the "Arabian Nights" had been at work. In the great hall and the *jardin d'hiver* were thirty-five supper-tables, each to hold ten guests, each dressed round an orange tree in full fruit. The illumination, with the usual fabulous number of candles, was resplendent. It was an entrancing sight. As we went in everybody uttered a little exclamation of surprise! "Mon Dieu! que c'est joli!" "Mais c'est ravissant!" "Oui," said Georges Du Luart, "c'est positivement féerique!" "Ah!" said the Duc d'Osuna, in his Spanish French, "n'est-ce pas que c'est zoli! C'est l'uniforme du réziment que zé commande." The good Duke, who was rather deaf, had taken all the enthusiasm as a well-merited tribute to his own personal appearance.

Du Luart, now (1915) the Marquis du Luart, one of the greatest authorities in France on sport and *vénerie*, and I had arranged to sit together; but somehow we got separated and had to take our chance of places. After wandering about I found myself at a table where I knew no one, but as usual, the other guests were most kind and amiable in their welcome to the stranger.

The gentleman next me began asking me all manner of questions about England and English people; it turned out that he had known my father, Charles Greville (of the memoirs), and his brother Henry, Lord Granville, and many other people whom I knew well. He was Monsieur Jean Tolstoy, Postmaster-General, a member of the Cabinet, and a personal friend of the Emperor. Our acquaintance did not end there; for he took many opportunities of showing me civilities during the remainder of my stay in Russia. It was a curious accident, for I do not suppose that there was another Russian in the crowd who knew my father.

During the whole time that the supper lasted the Emperor kept walking round the different tables, with a kindly word of welcome for many of his guests, and anxious to see that all were well served. There was not a speck of condescension about him;

just the anxiety and care of a most courteous host. The Emperor Alexander was certainly one of the greatest gentlemen that I ever saw in any rank of life.

A figure of mark at these Court functions was the Prussian Ambassador, Count Redern, who, with the help of his Countess and a very charming daughter, himself kept one of the pleasantest and best mounted houses in the town. His appointment to St. Petersburg was said to have been made for a unique reason. He had been named to one of the smallest European Courts. Now he possessed a service of silver plate of which he was passing proud, and it seemed to him to be utterly incongruous that its glory should be thrown away upon a very tiny Scandinavian capital. "Ich! Mit meiner Vaisselle!" he is said to have exclaimed with indignation when the appointment was notified to him. The objection was held to be unanswerable, so he and his service of plate were sent to cast lustre upon the capital of the Tsar. If, following upon Bismarck, he did not seem to be diplomatically an eagle, he was, at any rate, a great social success, and everybody liked him.

It seems as if I had no story to write but what relates to feasts and splendour and the glory of the Emperor. I may have been monotonous. But all this magnificence cannot forbid the door to sorrow. Even yet my readers are like the Queen of Sheba, "the half was not told them." But in this great stately home of the Tsars there is a chamber of grief, a corner which no man can penetrate without emotion; it is the reverse of a brilliant medal.

One day I was taken by one of my friends about the Court to see the apartment which was occupied by the Emperor Nicholas. It was the eve of the anniversary of his death, just nine years ago. There was no magnificence, no luxury here; nothing but Spartan simplicity—the heroic simplicity of the man whom he took as his ideal, the Duke of Wellington—just two shabby little rooms on the ground floor of the Winter Palace, which elsewhere glittered with all the treasures of fairyland; the outer room was furnished with a wardrobe and decorated with a few drawings of fortifications. Here the mightiest ministers and generals waited for their audiences, which were granted in the Emperor's sanctum—a

THE DEAD EMPEROR NICHOLAS I.

February 18th, 1855.

room no bigger than the quarters of a subaltern in Chatham Barracks, which served as bedroom, dressing-room and study all in one. The furniture was to match; on the walls hung a few French prints, a portrait or two, and some bad sketches of reviews and sham fights; at the head of his bed the likeness of his beautiful and favourite daughter Olga, in the uniform of the regiment which he gave her. Books were represented by a collection of caricatures; a narrow camp bedstead, the mattress as hard as stone; spread upon the bed the military cloak which had served him—so it was said—for fifty years, a simple grey cloak with a red collar, no better than that of a common soldier; his tunic was out ready to put on, his casque and sword handy. His solitary brush and comb, his toothbrush and shaving tackle, were ready for use—it was as if the man who had died nine years ago had only left that morning and was expected back in the evening. At one side of the room stood the writing-table, with drawers on each side. Here he used to sit with his ministers facing him, and I fancy that some of our acquaintances could tell of awkward moments passed at that table. On it lay his notepaper, inkstand, pens, and the almanack for 1855!

Everything just as he left it—every single thing save one only—a small and beautiful pencil drawing of his head as it lay in death upon the pillow. Altogether a pathetic sight! and it all seemed so intimate, as if the handsome, dead giant might at any moment come stalking into the room, and resent the intrusion.

It was the fashion among Russians in 1864 to talk of Nicholas as a tyrant before whom in his lifetime they crouched in terror, and of Alexander's accession to power as a release from bondage. No doubt in a measure that was true. At the same time it is no less true that those who knew him best loved him dearly. The fierceness of his will, no less than his personal beauty and his charm, appealed. Where he chose he was irresistible. He was one of those magnetic men whose power over the hearts and affections of others is almost superhuman—there are men, one or two in a century, who walk upon the earth as Gods to be worshipped.

One night there was a small dinner at Lord Napier's, just the members of the Embassy and one Russian guest, Admiral Greig,

the descendant of one of the many Scots who came over to Russia and took service there in the eighteenth century. His old Scottish connection put him on terms of very friendly intercourse with Lord Napier. That evening he told us the story of how he had carried the news of the battle of the Alma to the Emperor Nicholas.

Being soldier as well as sailor, General as well as Admiral, he had been aide-de-camp to Prince Gortchakoff (the brother of the Vice-Chancellor), who was commander-in-chief of the army in the Crimea. At the end of the day of the 20th of September, after the battle of the Alma, the Prince sent him to convey the intelligence of the disaster to the Tsar, with orders to tell no one what had happened till his Majesty should have received him. It was not a pleasant mission. He posted night and day till he reached the railroad, and at every halt for change of horses the people crowded round him, eager for news from the front; but he uttered not a word. At last, after a long, weary journey he reached the Palace, and was ushered into the Tsar's presence. The Tsar, anticipating glorious news from the war, sprang forward smiling to embrace him. The Admiral started aside and put out both hands with the palms outward as though to push back the Emperor, saying: "No, your Majesty! no! I bring bad news." The Emperor's whole face changed. Nicholas gave him one of those steady looks with which he knew how to petrify the man who displeased him; deeply angered, he demanded to know the worst.

At this moment the Empress came in. That the heights of the Alma should have been stormed in the face of the Russian army was something that the Tsar would not, could not, believe. He strode about the room, furious; but the Empress pacified him and gave him comfort. At last, when he had collected himself, he dismissed the Admiral, telling him to keep strict silence, and to tell no human being what had happened. Admiral Greig very humbly pointed out that the aide-de-camp in waiting and other gentlemen were outside the door and would at once ply him with questions. "Tell them nothing," said the Emperor. Here the Empress very quietly interposed: "On the contrary, tell them everything. There is no use in concealing the truth. I will be responsible."

It was an evil moment for a soldier. He was sent back post-haste to the Crimea in disgrace; but when he was badly wounded afterwards, the Tsar was appeased and sent him a message to say that he "kissed his wound." He was forgiven.

The reign of the Emperor Nicholas had not been a happy one. Indeed, during all his life he had been brought face to face with the dangers and troubles by which the kingly office is surrounded. He was but five years old when his father, the Emperor Paul, was murdered; on the rather mysterious death at Taganrog of his brother, Alexander the First—who had been ailing and had gone to the Crimea for a rest, but whose condition had not given rise to alarm—his next brother, Constantine, having previously renounced his claims, he was called to the throne in the last month of 1825.

As his very first act he was forced to put down the revolution of the Dekabrists, the Men of December, officers of the guards regiments and others, the chief of whom was one Pestel, who, under the pretence of putting Constantine on the throne, were plotting for the annihilation of the Imperial autocracy and the granting of a constitution—perhaps they had even wider views. The rising was quelled after feeding the gallows and Siberia. The moment was critical, and Nicholas was not the man to treat rebellion with rose-water. The reign ended, as it began, with a tragedy. Men said that the Emperor died of a broken heart; when the army which he loved was beaten, the ambition of a lifetime faded into thin air, and the proud spirit was humbled in despair.

In the country where no historian was at that time allowed to write that the Emperor Paul was murdered, but only that he died suddenly, it was obvious that the death of Nicholas could not openly be discussed. But there were whispers. It was said in secret by many men that the Emperor did not die a natural death. There was a story of a certain German physician who was ordered by the Tsar to give him a sure and painless poison. The physician of course refused and left St. Petersburg. On the following day it was given out that his Majesty was ailing; he had contracted a chill. Worse bulletins followed. After a few days, it was announced that he was dangerously ill; in a few more days that the end had come. Heart failure. The last ukase had been issued.

A Russian gentleman whom I knew well told me that as a youngster he was one of the pages of honour in waiting on the day when the death of the Emperor was made known to the public. It was his duty that night to watch with others over the dead Tsar. "Figurez-vous," he said, "que quoique nous fussions en Février* le corps sentait déjà mauvais." Taken in connection with the whisper to which I have alluded, this seemed to me not without significance. The mystery will in all probability never be cleared up; but at this distance of time there can be no indiscretion in alluding to a story which was widely believed, though it was only uttered in hushed tones and with bated breath.

In any case, for the death of the great Tsar England was largely responsible. When he paid his famous visit to Queen Victoria in the year 1844—a visit still commemorated at Newmarket by the Cesarewitch handicap—English statesmen were made thoroughly aware of what was his policy in the Eastern Question. He made no secret of it. His ambition was to drive the Turk, the "Sick Man" of Sir Hamilton Seymour's despatches, out of Europe and to *occupy* Constantinople, not, as he asserted, to *take* it. In that, no doubt, he was speaking honestly as regarded his intentions at that time, for he was essentially a truthful man and, as he liked to say, using the English word which he loved, "a gentleman."

He had another and, to him, a still higher and more cherished object—the freeing of the sacred places of Palestine from the hated presence of the Moslem. That, with him, was the pious dream of a devotee who carried religion almost to fanaticism. No Crusader was ever fired by a holier ardour. That shrines of such awe-inspiring sanctity as the Holy Sepulchre and Bethlehem should be under the domination of Islam; that disputes among the priests of the Christian creeds in the Holy Land should be subjected to the arbitration of some petty Turkish official, were to this chivalrous son of his Church—to this Christian gentleman—horrors too hideous for contemplation. To Lord Aberdeen, in these matters, he fully opened his heart, and though Lord Aberdeen was careful to avoid definitely committing himself to any "hypothetical en-

* 18th February, old style; 2nd March, new style.

gagement," the Tsar believed firmly that he was receiving nothing but encouragement. So convinced was he on the subject that when Lord Aberdeen became Prime Minister he thought in his happiness that the tocsin of the Turk had sounded. But when the crucial time came, England failed him, and cast in her lot with Louis Napoléon, to whom an alliance with Great Britain gave a much-needed addition of prestige.

The "Sick Man" was once more bolstered up, and Nicholas, deceived as he believed himself to be—at any rate foiled in his hopes and crushed in his darling ambition—prostrated by the failure of the army whose invincibility was with him a creed, saw nothing in front of him but what, to his proud heart, seemed ruin and despair. Broken in spirit, the great Tsar laid himself down to die. That was the tragedy of the little camp bed.

* * * * * * *

Here is a wrinkle for the Criminal Investigation Department. Towards the end of December, 1863 (Old Style) St. Petersburg was stirred by a crime which touched all Russians to the quick. Murder and sacrilege. On the opposite bank of the Neva stands the little wooden house of Peter the Great, together with a boat built by his hands. To this is attached a small church of great sanctity; indeed, even to me, a stranger belonging to another school of faith, this humble shrine, for some mysterious reason felt but not explained, even to myself, seemed more an object of reverence than many a gorgeous place of worship decked out in all the lavish trappings furnished by the orthodox, who never grudge the spending of their treasure for the adornment of their temples. To this sacred place the pious have been in the habit of bringing votive offerings, reliquaries and jewels of great price.

When on the twenty-first of the month (Old Style) the church was broken into and robbed, and the two guardians murdered, their skulls being battered in, as it was thought, with iron or leaden weights, great indeed was the consternation amongst the faithful from the highest to the lowest. The Tsar himself went to visit the scene of the tragedy. To the *mujik*, intensely religious, not to say superstitious, the effect was stupefying. An ordinary murder

leaves him calm and cold, and the death of the watchers was an affair of small account. What mattered a *mujih* or two more or less? The violation of the holy shrine was quite another matter.

After long and painstaking inquiries, circumstantial evidence showed that one Gudzevitch, a soldier, was the murderer. As to that there could be no doubt. But the man's confession was necessary, and this could not be obtained. Not all the cunning of judge and lawyers, not all the pious exhortations of the archpriest, Polissador, of the Church of St. Peter and St. Paul, who visited him several times a day, were able to extract a word from him. He remained as hard as a flint, stiffly protesting his innocence in the face of every proof. Of repentance not a hint. As the *Journal de St. Pétersbourg* put it, "There was nothing for it but to proceed to extreme measures." There was at that time in prison another soldier named Baouschkin, belonging to the Kharkov regiment. It was determined to shut this man up in the same cell with Gudzevitch in the hope that he might be able to worm something out of him.

On the seventh (nineteenth) of January, Baouschkin made his report. He declared that Gudzevitch asked him for what crime he was in prison, and that, on hearing that it was for murder, theft and arson Gudzevitch tried to induce him to confess that he was the murderer of the two watchmen at Peter the Great's house; he argued that, as he must suffer, it would put him in no worse position, and what a kindness he would be doing!

By degrees, playing upon the wretched man's hopes and fears, Baouschkin obtained all the details—the instrument with which the murder was committed (an axe, with the hammer end of which the men had been brained, and not a heavy weight, as had been supposed) was found, together with a box in which the stolen offertory had been contained, and the prisoner was condemned to death. Penitent he was at the last, moved thereto by the contemplation of the photograph of one of the murdered men which had been placed in his cell, that the sight might haunt him into confession and repentance. For civilians the death penalty was abolished, except for high treason; for them flogging with rods and Siberia were the punishment; but Gudzevitch, being a soldier,

must die. The night of his execution I met the officer who commanded the parade. He was shot, twelve conical bullets riddling his body, and even so he was not dead; it was a gruesome sight when the poor wretch fell and lifted himself slowly up—six more bullets and he was dead.

The criminal procedure, if successful, struck me as peculiar. It had something of the flavour of the Herodotean stories of the methods of ancient kings.

I do not believe that there was more crime in St. Petersburg fifty years ago than in any other city. The *mujik* is good-natured, easy-going, rather dull and childish, and his tastes are distinctly bacchanalian. But one could not fancy so simple a creature vicious or criminal. In old days there were frequently, if reports be true, murders of a peculiarly ugly kind. In the dark winter nights robbers used to infest the frozen river, waylaying the unwary footpad who ventured across alone. A stunning blow on the head was quickly given, and a hole in the ice was ready to receive a victim, stripped of his clothes and valuables; the body would be carried down the river under the ice, past Kronstadt, into the Baltic, and all trace of the crime would be lost for ever.

In my time the river was well policed, and the brilliant lighting not only shed over the city the joy of beauty, but gave safety in place of danger. But stories used still to be told of a certain wicked old watchman (*Budotchnik*) who, posted near the Blue Bridge, was supposed to have sent out to sea in this way upwards of thirty of the very people over whose lives and property it was his duty to keep guard. *Quis custodiet custodes!*

Since man has fallen, wickedness there must be in all nations. Satan is ubiquitous. But in Russia the doctrines of the Faith are so infused into the blood of the people that even the criminals are religious—at any rate so far as the outer observances are concerned. It is said that a Russian thief will cross himself with one hand while he picks your pocket with the other, and I have no doubt that even that murderous old Budotchnik would have sacrificed his own life rather than take down the *ikon*, the sacred image of his patron saint, from its place of honour in the corner of his room.

The piety of the people is very real, very sincere. Of that there can be no doubt; the greatest proof lies in the spirit of self-sacrifice and in the submission to privations which are serious and often injurious to health. Take the great festivals of their Church. Christmas Day, Easter and the feast of the Trinity are observed in all Christian lands, but the fourth holy day, the day of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin, is, so far as I know, mostly passed over with inattention. Here it is different. So sacred is the occasion that no man who can possibly help it will do a turn of work, indeed, there is a popular saying that "even the birds rest from building their nests on that day." The very *isvostchik* (cabman) deserts the streets, unless it be for bread's sake—the children must be fed, coin is scarce and food dear.

Lent, above all, is a sore trial to these poor people, but they bear it cheerfully. During those six cruel weeks they taste nothing but the poor and sordid food which is all that the Church allows them—an ugly soup made up of dried toad-stools, collected in summer and sold by the string, onions, pickled cucumbers, coarse cabbage, dry radishes, horse-radish and black bread; these ingredients are mixed up with an evil-smelling black oil made from hemp. The untempting mess of pottage is washed down by draughts of cheap *kvass*, a poor sort of beer brewed of rye and a little malt—a drink scarcely less nasty then the food. Upon this scanty diet the *mujik* grows thin, but he tightens his belt and goes about his work, kept in heart by visions of drunken happiness as soon as the last stroke of twelve on Easter Eve shall have rung the knell of his misery.

During one whole week of Lent every man gives himself up entirely to his devotions. At four in the morning he goes fasting to his church. There he stays without bite or sup until noon, when he leaves, and breaks his long fast with a dish of the revolting food which I have described. At four, if he can manage it, he returns to his prayers, which last till six, and yet not satisfied, he must again go to church in the evening. Whatever may be the motive power of all this devotion and abnegation—be it superstition or be it religion—it is quite impossible not to respect it, for it is as honest as truth itself.

His religion, his country, and the Tsar. Those, fifty years ago, were the three sacred objects of the Russian's worship, and their influence was so interwoven that it would be difficult to say which should be placed first. In no people could the feeling of nationality be more strongly developed; it was fed by a feeling of proprietorship absolutely unique. Every man, however humble his position in the world might be, conceived himself as having a share in the soil equal to that of the richest: it was a relic of the old nomad habits of the Aryan people, who wandered over Europe from the Pamirs: where they pitched their tent, there they were free to dwell, and from the ground which they tilled theirs was the harvest.

With the march of time the custom had long since faded away, but the idea, handed down by the remote ancestors, was still dimly alive in their posterity, and it was, moreover, a flicker which the recent emancipation of the serfs had in a measure rekindled. The Russian loves his country as something peculiarly his own, and he loves it, moreover, believing it to be the home of God and of the true religion. There is a country adage which says, "Our kingdom is invincible for God is in the midst of it." It must not be supposed that this high and patriotic feeling is confined to the peasants. The mighty in the land are just as ardent in this passionate devotion to the fatherland as their humbler fellow-countrymen, nor are they less strict in their religious observances.

A very false impression is created abroad by a certain class of Russians who haunt the boulevards and any places where dissipation and gambling are fast and furious—only going home from time to time to collect more roubles to throw into the swine-yards of Europe. These are the men who cast a cloud upon their country and tarnish the good name of their fellows. So strong is the inborn love of home among the Slavonic races that it is a hard matter to persuade the *mujik* to emigrate: and this is no misfortune, for in Russia the population has never been adequate to the vast area of its territory or to the wants of the country.

Emigration, as we understand it—this is to say, forming an establishment and founding a family in some new land for prosperity's sake—must be an idea utterly foreign to the Russian

character, which has been moulded for centuries in the idea that only one home is possible.

There is one form of superstition which the Russians share with the ancient Greeks. They delight in euphemisms and altogether object to the use of unlucky words. Brutally to announce the death even of a dog, a horse, a cow, or some favourite animal would be intolerable. The awkward corner is turned by a pretty phrase: "Sir, your dog bids you live a long life"—that is the orthodox announcement.

The strangest of all was told me by Prince Vassiltchikoff, an aide-de-camp attached to the War Office. He had been sent to Siberia on a special mission to report upon the prisons in that land of woe. Among other criminals he came upon a handsome woman, evidently of a superior class. Struck by her appearance, he asked her why she was there. Without hesitation the woman answered: "I made the sign of the cross upon my father." She had murdered him! It appeared that her father had illtreated her child; mad with rage, she stabbed him in the back. She expressed neither sorrow nor repentance for what she had done, and to all further questions her only answer was: "I have done wrong and I suffer for it—the rest is with myself." Could Æschylus himself have put more poignantly tragic words into that unhappy daughter's mouth? What a saying to express parricide! "I made the sign of the cross upon him."

Duels in Russia were very rare; all the more did they create a sensation when they did occur. There was a double duel which took place while I was there and which was much talked about. A young Polish officer of the Grodno Hussar regiment insulted two Russian officers. I never heard the rights of the story or what was the occasion of the quarrel. At any rate, the Pole had to fight both the men whom he had affronted. In the first duel, possibly from nervous excitement, he fired before the seconds gave the signal and broke his adversary's leg. The second duel took place the next day, and this time it was *à la barrière.* The Pole immediately on the signal to advance being given fired in the air. His adversary let him come forward to the extreme limit allowed by the agreement—five paces—took deliberate aim

and shot him in the head; he died a few hours afterwards. The officer who killed him was a rich man of good family, but none the less we were told that he would be broken, reduced to the ranks, and have to serve as a common soldier.

Duelling was strictly forbidden both by military and civil law. I suppose it is a crime, but none the less it does seem to me that there are certain cases in which it is a safeguard to society and more than permissible. The absurd journalistic duels of which we hear so much on the Continent are quite another matter.

The most famous duel in the history of Russian society was that in which the great poet Puschkin lost his life in the winter of 1837. The story is a curious one.

The poet had a very beautiful wife, whom he married at Moscow in 1831. He was very much in love with her, and proportionately jealous, especially of the attentions paid to her by an *attaché* of the Dutch Legation, a certain Monsieur Dantès-Heckeren. Puschkin, who suspected his wife of being too much inclined to listen to this gentleman's blandishments, was infuriated. Coming home one evening, he found the Dutchman as usual sitting at tea with his wife; as it was the fashion to pay visits after dinner, there was nothing to take umbrage at in that. Puschkin made no remark, but presently he turned out the lamp, throwing the room into darkness, and going to the fireplace, smeared some soot on his mouth, kissed his wife and went out of the room to get a fresh light. When he came back he found, as he expected, not only his wife's lips but the Dutchman's black with soot. Denial and excuses were out of the question, and Puschkin kicked the man out of the house. The next day they fought, and the poet received a mortal wound. He only lived three days and died in torture; he was but thirty-eight years old. The man who killed him married his widow. So much for the inexorable justice of the ordeal by battle.

Puschkin was the glory of Russian poetry. His was a chequered career, for he lived in a chronic state of being banished for treason and forgiven; he was the chartered libertine of politics, and a very signal example of the generosity of the Emperor Nicholas. Over and over again his violent principles, or no principles, brought

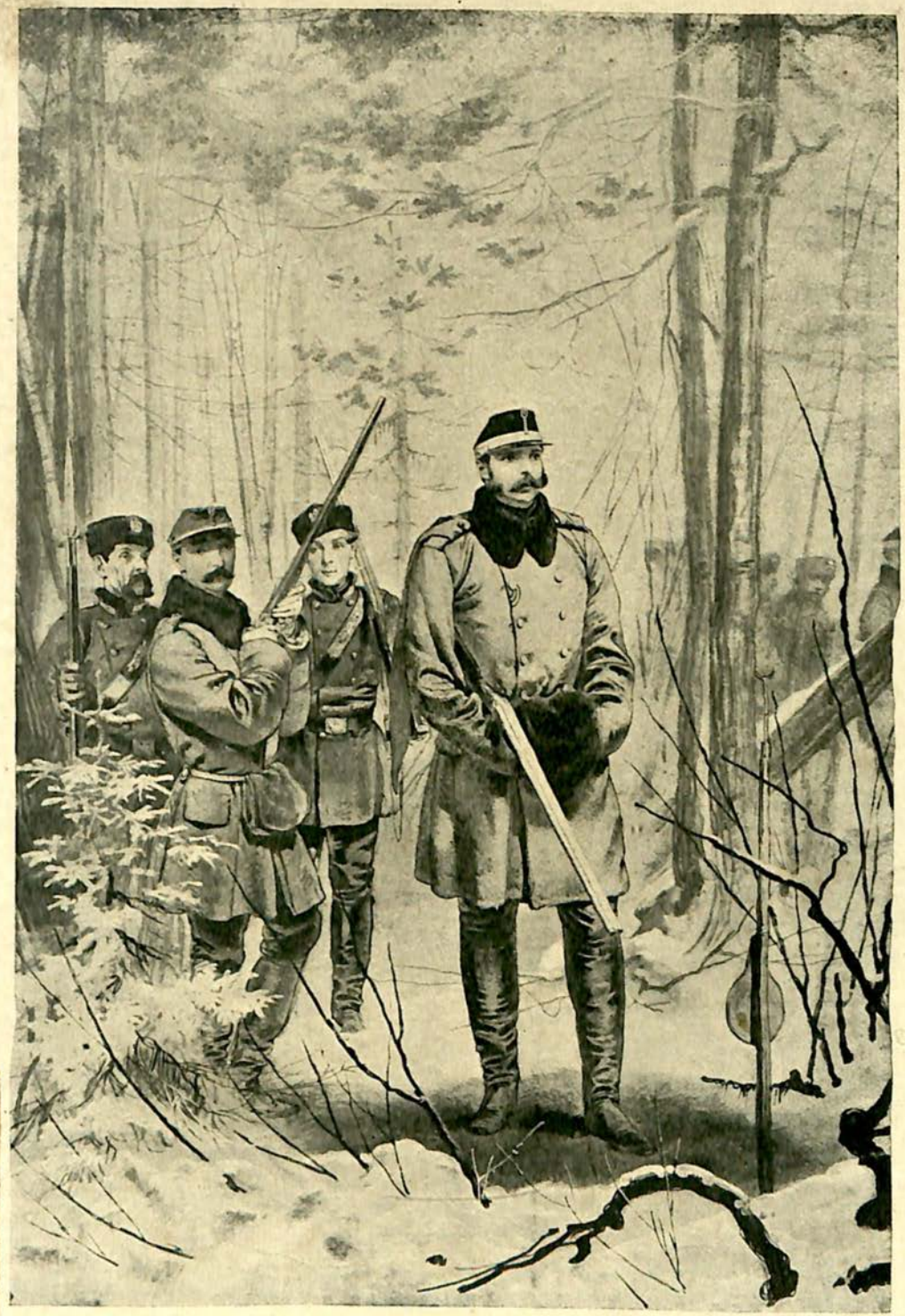
him into disgrace; over and over again the Tsar forgave. The Tsar, meeting him one foggy day in the street, recognized him, and bade him, since he was a poet, to improvise something. With consummate audacity, pointing to a street lamp, he at once spouted this quatrain:

In the place of that lamp
Which shines in the gloomy weather,
I'd hang the head of the Tsar
And shout out Freedom! *

In spite of his many escapades he died in high favour with the generous Tsar, who made him *Gentilhomme de la Chambre* and gave him twenty thousand roubles towards publishing his last poem. And yet there were people who spoke of Nicholas as a cruel, unforgiving tyrant! I think that if I were a Russian, I should be at least as proud of the memory of the Emperor Nicholas as of that of the poet Puschkin. He was indeed a great "gentleman."

The emancipation of the serfs in the month of March, 1861, was the greatest act of Alexander the Second's life. Whether looked at from the point of view of its intrinsic difficulties, or from that of its consequences, it was one of the broadest social reforms ever undertaken by any monarch. There are perhaps few people in this country who understand what serfdom really meant; it is usually thought that the serfs were all of them poor, ignorant peasants, leading squalid and hungry lives in the tillage of the lands of their owners. In the vast majority of cases this, no doubt, was so, but there were many exceptions. There were not a few of these men who possessed better natural gifts than the rest, had more or less contrived to educate themselves, and had been allowed to push their fortunes in various capacities as tradesmen, domestic servants, etc., in the great towns. One man of whom I was told on undoubted authority throve in his trade and became the fashionable hatter of Moscow. None the less, he was a slave—the property, the chattel, of a certain landlord, to whom a portion of his profits was yearly due.

* Ia bui v' miesto phonaria
Katorii svietiet v' niepagodu
Vieshal bui golovu Tsaria
I provosglocil svobodu."



THE EMPEROR ALEXANDER II., 1864.

From a sketch by Zichy.

That such a state of things should endure through more than the half of the nineteenth century is at this time unthinkable, yet it was so; and perhaps it would be necessary to have lived in Russia in the pre-liberation days in order to realize how little public opinion was shocked thereby. It is only fair to say that, in spite of the strong opposition which inevitably meets a great social upheaval, the Tsar was loyally helped by the more enlightened members of the aristocracy, men who were ready to do what they knew to be right, even though their properties were seriously affected. He was, moreover, ably seconded by his Minister of the Interior, Monsieur Valouieff, to whom must be given the credit of initiating all those measures of reform which were rendered necessary by the great change—especially the creation of the Semstvos, elective bodies something like our county councils, to which was delegated the management of local affairs. The nobles who so generously accepted what was a great sacrifice were rewarded by the Tsar with a special commemorative decoration.

On the anniversary of his accession to the throne, February 18 (March 2), 1864, the Emperor published an ukase extending the liberation of the serfs to Poland. The measure provided for the handing over to the peasants in fee simple the land which up to that time they had cultivated on behalf of their lords. The scheme was in all respects save one the same as that which had been propounded by the so-called National Government; but whereas the latter had proposed to indemnify the proprietor from the general revenues of the country, the Russian Government undertook to buy the land at sixteen and two-thirds years' purchase, and to recoup themselves by special taxation. The landlord was to retain his own domain, always the most fertile part of the property—corresponding to a sort of home farm on a gigantic scale, with its houses, farm buildings, etc. The Polish landlords were, of course, furious and declared that they would all be ruined. There were in rough numbers some five thousand principal owners, and there were in addition thirty Russian *majorats* (properties entailed upon the eldest son) which were equally concerned in the change. One of the representatives of the latter properties said to me cynically: "Nous sommes tous ruinés. Eh bien!

tant mieux, puisqu'il y aura plus de cinq mille de ces sacrés Polonais qui le seront bien plus que nous." These Russian *majorats* were the rewards of services rendered against the Poles.

One main principle which the Government had in view was to reward those peasants who did not join in the insurrection, at the expense of the landlords and the middle-class who were its heart and soul. The Polish peasant looked upon the landlord as his natural enemy—a tyrant of whom to be rid would be Paradise. He therefore was entirely pro-Russian, though he might not dare to declare himself. Keeping in mind this spirit, there were not lacking pessimists who declared that so soon as the ex-serf should find himself his own master, with nothing over him but the Russian Government, his views would be altered. With rebellion born in his blood, he would join the other camp, and be as bitter in enmity as he had been warm in a friendship which for him spelt hope. In time the benefactor would degenerate into the tax-gatherer, and the metamorphosis would be hateful and of ill omen.

The measure was framed upon a report by General Miliutin, who was sent on a special mission to gather information upon the spot; and the pamphleteering defence of the plan was entrusted to that very able penman and special pleader, M. Katakazy, to whom I have already alluded as the writer of Prince Gortchakoff's three answers to Lord Russell. His work on this occasion was a masterpiece both in what it said and in what it held back.

However people might carp and cavil at a piece of legislation which was distasteful to them, there can be no doubt that there was joy in the poor hovels of Poland. Still there were many shoals ahead needing a skilful pilot. It was easy enough to decree the broad principle of the ukase, but the working out of the details was quite another matter. Neither the Emperor nor his ministers had the power of creating light out of darkness. There were many difficulties to be mastered, many riddles to be solved, taxing the acutest ingenuity of the Russian statesmen. Three of the chief of the puzzles were the right of succession, the power of the peasant to sell his land, and the eternal labour question.

As regarded the right of succession, the Government professed

to attach great importance to the principle of large peasant holdings, but inasmuch as Poland was under the law of the Code Napoléon, it was obvious that at the death of a man with a family his property must be divided, and by degrees the holdings must become infinitesimally small. Crux No. 2.—If the peasant were allowed to sell or mortgage his land, the Jew usurer would soon be the owner of half Poland. Crux No. 3.—Where was labour to be found for the land left in the hands of the proprietors—as I have said before, the richest portion of the cultivated area? The freed peasant would have his hands full with the management of his own holding, and the class who formerly cultivated no land on their own account, and therefore did not come under the scope of the new law, would not suffice to till the domains of the nobles. Each of these three puzzles itself bristled with minor perplexities and embarrassments enough to break the heads of General Miliutin and his crew of experts.

A compensation at the rate of sixteen and two-thirds years' purchase may seem to us very inadequate. But the conditions of land in Poland were not what they are in France or in England. It is needful to remember the vast tracts of land lying far away from all communication, the scarcity of labour, the difficulty of transport, the expense of exporting produce and importing agricultural implements and other necessaries, and then it will be plain that the value of land in Russia and in Poland did not stand in the same relation to money as it did in England, France or Belgium I feel sure that, having regard to all the circumstances of the case, the ukase was an honest attempt to benefit the peasant on the one hand, and fairly to recoup the landed proprietor on the other.

On the 17th of April a deputation of seventy-three Polish peasants from the government of Warsaw and Radom arrived in St. Petersburg to convey to the Emperor the thanks of the agricultural labourers in Poland for the benefits conferred upon them by the decree. The authorities made a great fuss with them; they were lionized over the town in great cross-seated brakes, and it was good to see their happiness and their unconcealed wonder at all the great sights of St. Petersburg. Most of them had probably never been outside the circuit of their own lonely villages.

They created a great sensation, some dressed in Polish costume, but all wearing the square national cap—wild-looking fellows enough, but obviously quite tame and trustworthy, for only ten policemen were told off to look after them. The crowning point of their joy was reached when the Tsar received them in person, and gave them a dinner at the Winter Palace. What fairy tales they would have to tell when they should arrive at their farms and cottages hidden among the desolate swamps and forests of Poland!

The outing lasted for several days, and on the 23rd I went with Lord Napier to the banquet given to the deputation and to an equal number of specially selected Russian peasants from the district round the capital, who were told off to entertain the strangers and do the honours of the city. As they did not understand one word of one another's language, their comradeship must have lacked gaiety. But the meeting symbolized the union of the two nations, and in spite of the dearth of conversation, it made a good appearance of fraternization, and that was held to be much. The banquet took place in the Gorodskaia Duma, a sort of extraordinarily shabby town hall, something like a second-class waiting-room at a railway station. However, the frame was a secondary consideration so long as the picture was all right.

Presently there was a great stir outside and we were told that the Emperor was arriving. On hearing this joyful news, an enthusiastic Pole near me spat freely into his hands and proceeded to plaster down his hair and wash his face like a cat. *Un petit bout de toilette!* as Wigan, the great actor, used to say in *The First Night.*

The loyal joy with which the Emperor was received was very touching. As usual, he played his part most nobly, was very gracious and kingly, and as he walked round the hall had a smile and a kind word for almost every one of the men. When he had finished his round one of the men shouted in a stentorian voice: "Let us drink to the Tsar." This raised a thunder of applause and cheering, after which the Emperor, standing in the midst of the hall, was served with a glass of wine and said: "I drink to the indissoluble union of the two nations!" This, of course, was received with yells of joy, the men cheering like Eton boys on the Fourth of June

The Grand Duke Constantine was with the Tsar, and as he had recently returned from governing Poland, he was recognized and received a special ovation, upon which the Emperor drank to him and kissed him—he was his favourite brother, to whom he was deeply attached; the Grand Duke kissed him in return on the left breast—a pretty token of love and duty.

The Poles looked very picturesque and quaint in their national costume, but it was impossible not to be struck by the far finer appearance of their Russian compeers (of course both parties were made up more or less of picked men). Then the Russians wore beards, which so well befit the kaftan and northern dress, besides covering a multitude of sins against beauty, while the Poles were shaven, showing all their imperfections of feature. I was well pleased to have the opportunity of seeing this historic banquet. Lord Napier was the only foreigner invited, and I went in attendance upon him.

The Emperor's staff were always worthy of his own imposing appearance. The Imperial family who surrounded him were all men of great stature and good carriage, while old Prince Suvoroff, Monsieur Valouieff, the Minister of the Interior, and many of the general officers and aides-de-camp were fine, strikingly tall men. It was a goodly company of Anakim. Monsieur Valouieff, although in civilian dress, was so handsome a figure as to be always conspicuous, even among the brilliantly accoutred warriors; perhaps, like Lord Castlereagh at Vienna, he was only the more distinguished!

It seemed a pity that in so beautiful a city, where there is a wealth of magnificent buildings, there should have been no worthier place for a really memorable feast than this mean semblance of a town hall, which certainly did not beseem the occasion.

Well may the Russians call the sennight that goes before Lent "the mad week." Another name for it is *maslianitza*, or "butter week," but I prefer the first, for indeed Bedlam is let loose and plays the wildest pranks, and no one can say that the *mujik* takes his pleasures sadly. At the beginning of the week my coachman came to me and, according to treaty, asked leave to go and get

drunk. These coachmen are really great characters. They are out in all weather, and never grumble at being kept waiting for hours when the mercury in the thermometer has almost fallen out of sight. They show no signs of boredom or weariness. My man, Mikhail, for want of better company would conjure away the tedium by talking out loud to himself. I sometimes watched him out of my window enjoying his own conversation, shaking his head, cracking jokes and laughing his heart out at them, or telling himself some tear-compelling tale of woe. He was the ugliest man in the town and as true as steel—on one condition: every now and then he must get drunk; so we entered into a solemn compact which he never broke.

He would come to me from time to time, perhaps twice in a month, and say that it was long since he had been happy—would my Excellency be pleased to name a day when it would be convenient for him to be absent—*anglice*, "get drunk." I would look at my engagement book and see what I had to do. Monday, the French Embassy—Tuesday, a big ball—Wednesday, a ceremony at Court—should we say Thursday? "Slava Bogu" ("Glory be to God"), he would answer, "it shall be Thursday with your Excellency's forgiveness." On the Friday he would reappear with clockwork punctuality—a little pale and rather heavy-lidded, but perfectly cheerful. Without such an arrangement one was never safe. I had to dismiss four coachmen before I found this one, who was a treasure, and never played me false. The bargain was part of a system before which all foreigners, at any rate, had to bow lest worse befall them.

To see the saturnalia of the week at their maddest one had to go to the great Admiralty Place, the huge area of which was entirely taken up by booths, circuses, giants and dwarfs, cheap pantomimes and ballets, boneless contortionists and the inevitable Hercules of the Fair, with his weights and clubs. There was one very droll and quite national exhibition consisting of a representation of the creation of the world from chaos to the fall of man, in which the marionettes, worked by springs into all sorts of comicalities, were the actors. Of course there were ice-mountains for tobogganing, but by far the most popular entertainments

were the merry-go-rounds, which swarmed, filling every vacant place and making the days and nights hideous with the braying of discordant brass bands. But the noise and the riot were a pure delight to man, woman and child, whose shrieks of joy added pepper and salt to the great charivari. All the riff-raff of the town was gathered together, those happy ones who had a few kopecks rushing eagerly to spend them; the unfortunates who could not muster a copper quite as keen, some standing for hours knee-deep in the melting snow—for it was a dirty thaw—peering into the chinks between the boards of the theatres to try and get a peep at the glories within; others encouraging the patrons of the ice-mountains and wooden horses with approving shouts and wild applause. Making their way slowly, tortuously and with much splashing of icy slush through the seething crowd, were carriages full of middle-class folk who had come to see "all the fun of the fair," while numbers of policemen, mounted and on foot, bawling and swearing at nothing, and for nothing, added to the din of the inferno.

Here was indeed King Carnival supreme in state. But all this was but the prelude; the crowning glory of the festival was yet to come. For what is joy without *vodka*, and what is *vodka* unless it be drunk in sufficient quantities to drown memory and consciousness? The *mujik* would probably endorse the five classical reasons for drinking—1. The advent of a friend. 2. You are thirsty. 3. You may be thirsty some time hence. 4. The good quality of the liquor. 5. Any other reason!

I am reminded as I write these lines that in a few days the mad week of 1915 will take place, and there will be no *vodka*! What will happen? What will my poor Mikhail do if he be yet alive?

And we! How were we spending the mad week, while the proletariat were playing high jinks on the Admiralty Place? The great folk were in what Shakespeare calls "holiday humour," no less than the small, and they too were bent on making the most of the last merriment that the Church would allow till the long spell of Lenten sadness should be past; and this they achieved by turning day into night. By one o'clock in the afternoon we had to array ourselves in evening dress to go and eat *blinni* at one

or another of our kind friends' hospitable houses. *Blinni* are a sort of scone, a cross between a pancake and a crumpet, eaten with fresh butter and caviare, a very tempting form of food. After feasting upon *blinni* comes dancing, generally a regular ball, with cotillon and mazurka complete. Then dressing for dinner, two or three parties and at least one ball. All business at a standstill, nothing but pleasure, more pleasure and yet again pleasure. By the end of the week the world seemed a little limp, and I think we all realized that " surfeit is the father of much fast."*

It was not very often that the men of letters made an appearance in the society of St. Petersburg. I was all the more interested when one evening Lord Napier invited a few of them to dinner at the Embassy; amongst them was Turgenieff, the famous author—a tall, strikingly handsome man with grey hair—altogether a commanding figure. I was much disappointed at not being able to hear him talk, but I was placed a long way from him, and as he left immediately after dinner, I had no opportunity of speaking with him. I sat next to M. Novikoff, an official of high position, who was very communicative.

The conversation round us turned upon the colonizing policy of the old Romans, with whom M. Novikoff found great fault, saying how foolish it was of them to punish as a crime any attempt on the part of the conquered tribes to regain their liberty. Such attempts, according to him, might be treated as acts of war, but not visited with the severity merited by treason. I could not help hinting to M. Novikoff that the policy which he so strongly condemned in the Romans was something uncommonly like, or even identical with, that of Russia in Poland. M. Novikoff became very much confused and changed the subject to that of the liberation of the serfs. In this connection he talked of M. Valouieff, the responsible minister, in terms of contempt, which quite took me by surprise. I ventured to ask whether M. Valouieff was not held to be a man of great talent. His answer was characteristic: " Mon Dieu, oui! puisque l'Empereur l'a voulu."

The chronicling of the small beer of parties is but poor stuff; and yet there was one party which to me meant very strong ale

* *Measure for Measure*

THE EMPEROR ALEXANDER II. AT CLOSE QUARTERS WITH A BEAR
(February, 1864).
From a sketch by Zichy.

indeed, and so I am fain to write of it even after fifty years. One evening M. Jean Tolstoy sent out about thirty invitations for a very small gathering, myself among the number, to meet the Tsar, and listen to music. As the Emperor was expected, I of course retired into the background, deeming that he would only wish to speak to the *gros bonnets;* however, when M. Tolstoy led him into the room he gave a look round, and seeing me, to the amazement, not to say petrifaction, of the mighty, he came striding up to me, shook hands and began talking in Russian, saying that he heard that I was learning his language. I bowed—and he went on speaking.

For a few minutes we conversed in Russian, and then, after paying me many compliments, to my relief he changed to French. He asked me a great many questions in connection with my new study—did I not find it very difficult? What language did I think it most resembled? I told him that I thought there was similarity with none so far as I knew, except as regarded Aryan roots, but that there were more grammatical analogies with Greek than with any other language of which I had any knowledge. He agreed, and that led him to speak of Latin, reminding me of what I had said to him at my presentation about the public orator's speech at Oxford, at whose expense he once more laughed heartily. He spoke for some little time about life at the University and the beauty of Oxford, which seemed to have interested him greatly, and after a very pleasant talk, went on to speak to some of the other guests. Any mark of the Emperor's condescension was sure to make a great sensation at St. Petersburg, and for twenty-four hours I was quite a hero. "On dit que l'Empereur a causé avec vous en Russe—vous devez en être joliment fier!" That was the gist of what everyone whom I met the next day said to me. I should have been even less or more than human if I had not felt flattered and proud.

One evening Lady Napier, who had rather broken down after the trials of the winter and was soon going to Germany for a rest and change, invited a few of the diplomats and other friends to a small farewell rout. Belloli, the painter, had just sent home a portrait of her which was much praised. General Cassius Clay,

after looking at it thoughtfully for a few moments and then at her, said: "I guess, Ma'am, you was ruddier when that was done." Our much-loved ambassadress certainly was looking a little pale, and tired; but the good General probably never heard the old saying, "Toute vérité n'est pas bonne à dire." The Duc d'Osuna was even more droll. His criticism of the portrait was: "Oui, c'est zoli—c'est même très bien; mais le portrait qu'il a fait de moi est bien plus zoli!" He was such a dear little man, and so kindly, that one loved him just as he was with his weaknesses and small vanities, which hurt nobody; everyone laughed, and nobody would have wished him otherwise

At Prince Gortchakoff's on the 18th we heard the news of the storming and capture of Düppel. The Prince's remark to the Prussian *chargé d'affaires* on getting the telegram was, "J'espère enfin que c'est la paix!" He did not seem to think that the united forces of Austria and Prussia combined had much to boast of in having beaten unassisted Denmark.

Baron Plessen, the Danish Minister at St. Petersburg, was a man of great ability, calm, just and moderate in his views. One day he talked to me for a long time about the war and the causes which led to it. The pith of his remarks is worth transcribing. "If France and England had been able to agree upon this affair the war might have been prevented. Russia would not have remained idle, and it is known to which side her sympathies lean. But France and England could not agree. Meanwhile England has been perpetually making apparent advances towards action which have encouraged the Danes to prolong their obstinate resistance. The Danes at Copenhagen see matters far differently from us, who, calmly and at a distance, can weigh the truth of reports and judge of the exact bearing of protests and propositions. At Copenhagen the public mind is so inflamed that a mere piece of newspaper tittle-tattle is enough to convince men that England and France will actually send a fleet to the Baltic, and this it is which caused the Danes so stubbornly to refuse an armistice which would have saved Düppel and spared thousands of lives. But with the best intentions, England has been a bad friend to Denmark, for she has raised expectations which she could not

realize. Even if she had determined upon helping Denmark, she could not have spared an adequate land force.

"As for Sweden, she promised her twenty thousand men and did not send them; but if she had performed her promises, the Germans would have called in forty thousand troops, and she would have been of no use. Besides, it must be admitted that the dismemberment of Denmark would never be really displeasing to Sweden, who has always had an eye upon the islands. . . . England has throughout treated Germany with too little respect—she thought that she had only to speak to be obeyed. But the Germans are strong, and too proud to bear dictation."

Obviously Baron Plessen disapproved of the action of his Government in "prolonging their obstinate resistance" at the bidding of the Copenhagen mob, whom they feared; and much as I admired the gallant defence of Düppel, I could not help sharing his view. But the important point for us in what he said lay in his remarks about the fast-and-loose policy for which Lord Russell was responsible, and the wavering encouragement without which the Danes might "have saved Düppel and spared thousands of lives." That unstable swinging of the pendulum was a blame which no special pleading could remove. And what it cost! And what it is costing now, fifty-one years later!

April 22nd (10th).—Until this morning there was no sign of the breaking up of the Neva. The weather for some days had been beautiful, the nights lovely, and nowhere can the entrancing splendour of moonlight and starlight be seen to greater advantage than in this city of gold and silver spires. How poor Whistler would have revelled in it! One night, in addition to the usual glories of the darkness, there was a perfect lunar rainbow bent by the fairies over the Isaac's Cathedral. But of spring no faintest message. All at once my servant came running in with the news that the river was moving. I hurried out to the embankment, and found all the world and his wife there, watching the welcome wonder. It seemed as if no one could stay at home and miss the great sight of the year.

For many days the ice of the solid river had been quite black, but now it had turned white again, and was slowly, almost

imperceptibly, drifting seaward. Gradually yawning clefts showed themselves and the huge mass was split into great blocks. Then the rush of the river began in earnest; deserted hayboats, looking picturesquely gloomy against the dazzling ice and sky, came floating down the stream, to be dashed into a thousand splinters against the permanent bridges. A few unhappy dogs which had been unwarily disporting themselves upon the river while it was yet unbroken were unable to make their escape, and were carried away to the Baltic on the iceblocks, howling piteously. It was impossible to leave the crowded quay while the sight lasted, and at night the effect was even more fascinating; the moonlit steeples and towers, reflected a myriad-fold on the facets of the ice, made the strange beauty of a scene which, even upon the Russians, does not pall.

The following morning at a little before ten o'clock the thunder peals from the guns of the fortress announced that the ceremony of crossing the water had begun. Every year, as soon as the river is free of the danger of the larger masses of what are miniature icebergs, the Commandant of the Fortress is rowed over in state to the Winter Palace to carry to the Emperor a goblet of Neva water. His Majesty in return fills the cup with gold pieces—a perquisite of the Commandant. These cunning officers used to take care to procure the largest vessel that could be found, until at last the abuse was stopped and a fixed measure adopted for the ceremony.

No boat may cross the river before the Commandant, but he is followed by quite a little fleet of river craft manned by *mujiks* in their different-coloured shirts, on a bright morning a picturesquely quaint sight. Salvos of artillery; curiously-shaped and many-coloured boats; guards presenting arms; the rays of the sun turning the ice-blocks into gigantic opals; the crowds watching on the quays; the golden steeples all ablaze with light; drums rattling and trumpets blaring; flags flying from every window! After this fashion Russia celebrates the funeral rites of the winter, the baptism of the spring.

When the Almighty first set his bow in the cloud it was not more welcome than the arrival of Palm Sunday to the starving Russian.

It does not make an end of the sorrows of Lent, but it comes laden with hope: the austere and hungry days are numbered, and the beginning of a series of sublime ceremonials brings with it the buds of a new joy which will burst into life with the dawn of the paschal feast.

Very solemn are the observances of the Holy Week in the Greek Church. The liturgies are grand, imposing, soul-stirring; their music so compelling and emotional that they bring home to one the strength of Tolstoy's great saying, "Le sentiment religieux est après tout indispensable."

As a race, judging by the way in which we face our religion, we Britons are, I suppose, an unemotional people. With us ritual is a question of the individual; to one man a stimulus, to his neighbour a horror. In Russia, on the contrary, it seems to be a national necessity, satisfying an endemic craving; to the lower orders, indeed, the be-all and end-all of religion: not, as I think I have already shown, a religion necessarily acting as a high moral force or even as a deterrent, but in some mystic way a spiritual comfort in the present, as it is in the future the promise of the wiping out of all crime and salvation by virtue of the great Sacrifice. For the Slav the call to the soul must be through the imagination, and that is where the imagery of the Greek Church triumphs. A highly symbolical ritual is of the very essence of the orthodox faith, and since ritual there must be, where could you find it more reverent, more devotional, more suggestive of the Divine Mystery, than in the services of these last days of Lent? The music breathes tragedy; the swelling voices of the choristers rise from the lowest depth of sorrow to the sublimest heights of ecstatic adoration; the canticles and antiphons are so entirely one with the rites of the Passion that I imagined that this heaven-born music must be as old as the liturgies themselves, foreshadowing Wagner's theory of the twin-birth of music and poetry. But that is not so. I was informed that it is no older than the eighteenth century. Could it, I wonder, have been based upon some much more ancient model? It is difficult to conceive these services without the solemn chanting of the priests which is of their very essence.

Palm Sunday Eve is one of the holiest of the anniversaries observed by the Greek Church; none is more pregnant with symbolism. Prince Gortchakoff, always kind, invited me to attend the evening service in his chapel. It was a singularly impressive ceremonial, not, of course, so steeped in tragic emotion as those which would follow later in the week, for symbolically we were celebrating a joy, not a death—the triumphant procession when the people shouted, Hosanna to the Son of David, welcoming with loud acclaim the entry of their King into His capital, "coming in the name of the Lord."

The first striking feature of the holy rite was the bringing in of a small table upon which were set out vessels containing oil, wine, grain and five loaves typifying the five barley loaves with which the Saviour fed the five thousand in the desert place near Bethsaida. Very reverently these were blessed by the priest, who at the same time offered up a prayer to God that oil and wine and grain might not fail His people during the ensuing year.

The great moment was when the palm branches were produced, carried in a huge pot to be blessed, sprinkled with holy water, and incensed with the fumes of consecrated spices and gums. To each of the congregation a taper was given by an attendant, and one of the newly-blessed palm branches was handed by the officiating prest to each of us. The priest then entered the Holy of Holies, *Sviataia Sviatuich*, by the Doors of the Lord, and we symbolically followed the Son of David on his royal progress. The Gospel was read, the blessing delivered, and the service, which had lasted two hours, during which we remained standing, was at an end.

None but a consecrated priest may cross the threshold of the Doors of the Lord or enter the *Sviataia Sviatuich*. The crazy Emperor Paul once received a just rebuke from the Metropolitan for wishing to break this law. The Emperor stands much in the same relation to the Orthodox Church in Russia as the King of England does to our Church. He is the Head, that is, the eldest son, of the Church, but he cannot officiate or even vote in the Synod. The Emperor Paul, however, wished, as Head of the Church, himself to conduct the service. Full of religious ardour, he arrived

one day by the side door of the altar, and was received by the Metropolitan. The Tsar called for priest's robes, announced his intention of celebrating the Mass, and prepared to enter the Holy of Holies, when, just as he was about to pass the threshold of the Doors of the Lord, the prelate stood before him, barring the way, and said, "Kneel, sire! This is your place. You may go no further." The Emperor, to do him justice, took the reprimand well, and the Metropolitan did not suffer for his bold speech. This story is not recorded in history—it is not likely to be; but it was told me by a Russian gentleman of high position, and is a matter of common knowledge.

On the Thursday in Passion Week there is a very interesting ceremony: the washing of the feet of twelve priests in the Isaac's Cathedral. I had been misinformed as to the time, and so unfortunately missed it.

In a Church in whose offices emotion plays so intense—if it did not savour of impiety one would be tempted to say so dramatic—a part, Good Friday must inevitably be celebrated by ceremonies imaging the blackest woe. Nowhere is the tragedy of the Cross represented with so much realism—a realism that might easily have degenerated into something shocking, were it not so hallowed by a veneration born of the Divine Love which said, "This do in remembrance of Me." It is hardly too much to say that on this day the orthodox Christian lives through the whole awful tragedy now nearly two thousand years old. No other man sees it so vividly before his eyes.

In the morning, torn by sorrow, he takes down the Body of the Saviour from the Cross, and with as much reverence as if it were a real corpse, lays it in a lighted funeral chapel to await the burial service of the evening. This I was allowed to witness in the Imperial Chapel of the Winter Palace. The service began with a Mass. The priests, of whom there were four besides the arch-priest, the deacons, readers and choir, were all in deep mourning; the latter in a sort of Court dress, with swords, the clergy in vestments of black velvet and silver. The Mass was, as I was told, performed after the traditions of the worship of the early Christians in the catacombs. In the centre of the church

was the bier, covered with a cloth representing an effigy of the dead Saviour, with the Gospel on the breast as at a funeral.

Indeed, the whole ceremony is a solemn funeral service. During the Mass every person present was presented with a lighted wax taper, and the bier was surrounded by magnificent candelabra carrying wax lights. As soon as the Mass was over, the choir drew themselves up in triple row behind the priests, who stood on each side of the bier, the arch-priest in the centre, with two deacons supporting him, facing the altar. Then arose the funeral dirge, sung by about fifty fine voices, very soft and still, the basses especially making a fine effect—all the music unaccompanied. At the end of the funeral chant the key changed, and there followed a louder canticle. The priests, one at each corner, and the chief priest in the middle, raised the bier upon their heads and carried it round the church, the whole congregation kneeling and touching the ground with their foreheads while they devoutly crossed themselves. The bier having been replaced and the choir having taken up their former position, the deacon thundered out the *Ektenia*, a litany in which the choir made the responses " Gospodi pomilui " (" Lord, have mercy ! ").

After this the deacon read a short passage from one of the epistles, and went into the Holy of Holies to fetch the Gospel, which he presented with a reverence to the chief priest, who read a portion of the Scripture and delivered a blessing.

The Gospel having been taken back into the *Sviataia Sviatuich*, the chief priest fell upon his knees and made two low obeisances, each time touching the floor with his forehead ; drawing near to the bier, he kissed the head and feet of the image and the book of the Gospels which lay upon the breast, and retired with a third obeisance. Two by two, the other priests followed his example, each, as he retired, bowing to the chief priest and to his colleague. Next the deacons, and after them the congregation, beginning with the ladies present, went through the same reverent formalities, and the ceremony was at an end.

No description, at least none of which I am the master, can convey an adequate idea of the solemnity and impressive grandeur of this rite. I can but set down what I saw. Let each man fill

in the colouring for himself; the trappings of woe; the hushed voices of the dirge; the thunder-peals of the deacon in the *Ektenia*; the choking emotion of the celebrants; the burial of the dead Christ!

More precious than all the gold and jewels and ornaments with which the piety of potentates has enriched the Imperial chapels are two relics which are held in great veneration: the hand of St. John the Baptist, and the portrait of the Blessed Virgin painted by St. Luke. The hand of the Baptist was a present given by the Head of the Order of the Knights of Malta to the Emperor Paul. Of the picture by St. Luke I had but a very hazy sight. I should have liked to have held it in my hand, or at any rate, to have been allowed a close inspection of it. No doubt I might have obtained that favour for the asking, but I did not like to risk being considered indiscreet. As it was, I could see nothing but a gorgeous frame with a golden crown and precious stones such as adorn all the sacred pictures of the Church. Dim with age, the picture itself at the distance at which I saw it was a cloud.

I wonder how much money was spent in St. Petersburg on Saturday, April 18th (30th), being Easter Eve. It is a great day for buying and selling, and the market is so beset by crowds of eager customers, keenly bent on buying the wherewithal to break the long fast which ends at midnight, that the mounted police have to muster in force in order to preserve some semblance of order. Shortly before midnight on Easter Eve the town was illuminated by candles placed at intervals along the pavement, the guns of the fortress began to crash out their joy-signals, and the pious folk flocked to the churches to hear the priest give out the glorious news of the resurrection of the Saviour.

The celebration of Easter at the Isaac's Cathedral is said to be quite magnificent; but I did not see it, for I was bidden to keep the feast at Princess Kotchoubey's and I could not refuse, as she had always been so kind to me. The service of a chapel in a private house, however grand it may be, can never come up to the gorgeous spectacle such as that of the great procession which thrice marches round the colossal building. Still the ceremony

was very imposing, and the entertainment afterwards, as always where the Princess is hostess, sumptuous in the extreme.

In the streets the night which heralds Easter is a mad jubilee. Everybody salutes everybody else with the joyful cry, first uttered by the priest in church, "Christos Voskres" ("Christ has arisen"), and everybody answers "Dieistvelno on Voskres" ("Of a truth He has arisen"). By four o'clock in the morning the proletariat is very drunk and very happy. The noise and the shouting and the merriment might be in honour of a great victory, as indeed it is—the Divine victory over death!

By dawn the booths and merry-go-rounds of the Butter Week have sprung up like mushrooms in an August night, and all through Easter Sunday the cry of "Christos Voskres" will be dinning in our ears. As for the poor Emperor, the twenty-four hours were enough to tire him out. Think of having to kiss from seven to eight hundred people directly after midnight; and then to begin again with deputations from each of the regiments of the Guards after breakfast! The Empress had to plead her poor health in order to escape from the fatigue of these receptions. I sometimes thought that it must need the strength of a Samson to bear the weight of duty that is laid upon a Russian Emperor. Alexander the Second carried himself nobly and equably through the weary rites and ceremonies that are the heritage of Tsardom's woe; but what a strain it must often have been!

* * * * * * *

After the long weeks of fasting and the ten wild days of feast and revelry, St. Petersburg began to calm down and the world, high and low, was at peace.

May 4.—A storm of indignation was raised by the arrival of the *Indépendance Belge* with the report of a speech delivered by Pope Pius IX. in the Consistory upon the occasion of a canonization. His Holiness, while in the same breath disclaiming any intention of fomenting revolt or of encouraging treason, made a furious attack upon the Tsar for his policy in Poland He accused him of endeavouring to uproot the Roman Catholic religion, of

exciting rebellion under the pretence of quelling it, of transporting whole populations to frozen and desolate regions, and of removing bishops from the functions to which the Church had called them. There is nothing so dangerous, nothing so misleading as falsehood with a thin veneer of truth. No one can deny that great numbers of Poles had been deported; but many, if not most, of them had been sent to Samara, a province in the south-east of European Russia, rich in that famous black earth which makes a farmers' paradise, in which numbers of prosperous German colonists were doing a thriving trade in wheat, tobacco, cattle and horses, while even those who were sent to Siberia were described to me by an Englishman who had just come from there as quite happy and comfortably established with their families. Siberia is by no means the cruel country about which such terrible tales have been served up for European consumption, dressed with all the condiments of fanatic hatred.

Even Dostoievski—no friend to the Russian Government—when writing against the prison system of Siberia, to which he was sent for political reasons, speaks almost with affection of the country itself. It was the life of the criminal convict in Siberia which was such a nightmare, and with that the transported Poles had nothing to do. But Siberia was always a good name of terror, and as such the Pope made rhetorical capital of it. As regards the question of uprooting the Roman Catholic Church in Poland, there can be no doubt that the Greek Church has always been very intolerant. There was indeed a time—in the Middle Ages—when the followers of other creeds were not looked upon as Christians; the Russian chroniclers called the Roman Catholics "unbaptized Latins," holding that there could be no baptism without total immersion; and when the Tsar received ambassadors it was customary for him to give them his hand, but in the audience hall there was kept a golden vessel in which the autocrat might wash off the contamination.

Though these prejudices were dead and matters of history, the hatred which inspired them was very much alive, and the fighting in Poland was in a great measure a war of religion. Still it was simply an invention of the priests, wishful to keep up the spirit

of rebellion, to say that there was any desire on the part of the Government to extirpate their faith.

The Polish peasants, who were as ignorant as their own cattle, were told by the priests that the worship of God according to the Catholic creed was forbidden in Russia, and that persons who died in that communion were refused Christian burial, and thrown out into the forests and wastes to rot or be devoured by the wolves. In order to disabuse the Poles of these ideas, the deputation of peasants of whom I have already spoken were taken to Mass in the great Romish church and also to visit the Roman Catholic burial ground. Seeing, it was hoped, would be believing.

In official life both Roman Catholics and Lutherans have held high places. Curiously enough Count Nesselrode, the famous Chancellor, was a member of the Church of England, having been baptized on board a British man-of-war, and till his death he remained a faithful son of our creed. Count Creptovitch, who was formerly Minister in England, and whom I knew well, was a Roman Catholic, and held a great position. Many others could be named. But would Count Creptovitch, a devout Roman Catholic, have given the support of his great name to a Government pledged to the extirpation of his communion from any part of the Empire? The thing was absurd and incredible on the face of it.

Of the third accusation brought by Pope Pius—that of the removal of the bishops—it was not difficult to dispose. The Archbishop of Warsaw and the Bishop of Vilna had been politically very troublesome—not a matter of infrequent occurrence among the soldiers of a very militant Church. They were requested to leave their sees until matters should have settled down, and they had not much to complain of. They were extricated without any loss of dignity from a very difficult position and were allowed to retain all their honours, titles and emoluments, a slight deduction being made from the latter to cover certain expenses which were a liability of their offices; and there seemed no reason to preclude their return in happier and more peaceful times once more to take possession of the charge of their flocks.

The Pope's speech was certainly injudicious and ill-timed. His

Holiness had evidently been misinformed; zeal had, not for the first time in the world's history, outrun truth.

May the 9th.—I suppose that there could hardly be a more magnificent military spectacle than that of the Spring Parade held on the Champ de Mars. The Empress and all the great people of St. Petersburg were present in a grand stand, by which a little ragged cur had taken up his position and, sitting upright on his tail, watched the proceedings as a rather captious critic from beginning to end, moving his head from side to side with unflagging interest. When the Emperor rode on to the ground surrounded by his brilliant staff of generals and aides-de-camp, he passed in front of each corps and to each he addressed the question, "Are you well, my children?" and the men thundered out, "We wish you health!" When the march past began, the Tsar signified his approbation of each squadron or battalion, and the men roared with one voice, "Glad to do our best." There were thirty-two thousand men in all, under the orders of the Grand Duke Nicholas*—a noble-looking host, as gorgeous as glittering uniforms could make them. At the head of the other troops, the mail-clad Circassian body-guard, dashing past at a gallop, some of them throwing down their scimitars in front of them and heeling over to pick them up again at the saluting-point, made a gallant and fantastic show, with just a touch of Asian mystery to add a glamour of the East to the picture.

The cavalry of the Guard, splendidly mounted, with their cuirasses and helmets flaming in the sunshine; the pennons of the lancers; the infantry; the artillery; all spick and span, showed off the panoply of war in its most attractive shape—altogether a dazzling pageant. Whether it was anything more than that one witness seemed to doubt, for when the last man had marched past and the Emperor turned to leave the ground, the little dog got up, stretched himself, yawned and proceeded to mark his contempt of the whole proceedings in the most accentuated fashion. One Russian gentleman, a statesman in a very

* The father of the present (1915) Commander-in-Chief of the Russian army in Poland and Galicia.

high position, told me that it had been his custom for years to attend this annual review, wondering at its stateliness, and that his pride used to rise in hero-worship when he thought of the invincibility of these glorious warriors.

The Alma and Inkermann shook him in his faith, and since then he had left off his yearly visit to the Champ de Mars; there was "trop de clinquant et trop peu de réalité." He agreed with the little dog.

One thing struck even my unskilled civilian eye: as the artillery came rattling under a window in the British Embassy, which looked on to the parade ground, I noticed that no two batteries were armed with the same pattern of gun. I could not help wondering what would be the effect of this in action; whether there was not great risk of mistakes in the serving out of ammunition, and other conceivable causes of confusion.

That evening at dinner at the Club Anglais* I chanced to sit next to a general officer with whom I was acquainted, and I asked him what was the reason of this difference in the equipment of the various batteries. His answer was that the great authorities on artillery had not yet come to a conclusion as to what was the best service gun, so Russia was biding her time and allowing the other armies to make experiments for her benefit.

It so happened, however, that I knew of six or more agents for different gun factories in England, France, and Germany, who were staying in St. Petersburg with well-filled pouches touting for their several firms; and this had been going on for months; so the Russian gunners had to deal with weapons of many patterns, the efficiency of the army being made of no account so long as those pouches continued to empty themselves and bulge once more. This was a point upon which the Embassies were better informed than the ministers of the Emperor.

* An excellent and hospitable club, "Anglais" only in name, of which the *corps diplomatique* were made honorary members.

CHAPTER XIII

1864

MOSCOW

May 18.

"IS there anybody here who can speak English? Oh! IS there anybody here who can speak English?" A piteous cry from a brother Briton in distress must be attended to. It came from a first-class carriage in the train for Moscow standing in the station at St. Petersburg. I found a young man trying in vain to come to some understanding with the guard; he knew neither French nor German nor Russian; indeed, his English was none of the best, his aspirates being indiscriminately used or omitted.

When I had solved his difficulties for him he told me that he was travelling for pleasure to see the world. He had been staying at the boarding house chiefly used by "drummers"—travellers of English commercial houses. Of the country, its institutions and customs he knew absolutely nothing; but the drummers had stored his mind with all manner of gruesome tales of the dangers and terrors threatening the unwary traveller. Murray's guide to him was all-sufficient, unless he found himself in some position of alarming difficulty, when he would dismally howl his "cuckoo-cry"—"Is there anybody," etc. One night he had nearly collapsed with fear. He had been to some place of entertainment and was being driven home when, finding himself in a rather narrow, dark street, he took into his head that his coachman was decoying him to some thieves' den (Oh! those drummers!) where he would be robbed and murdered. He stopped the astonished coachman,

who must have thought him mad, and began yelling for help. His shouts soon brought a good-natured polyglot Russian, who assured him that all was well, and that he was simply being taken to his destination by the nearest way. Two or three days later I met him in Moscow in one of the churches, listening with rapt attention to a very dirty monk extolling in Russian the miraculous powers of certain relics. His journal, if he kept one, would have been interesting.

Prince Boris Galitzin, a very smart young officer in the Chevalier-Gardes, a famous leader of cotillons in the great houses of St. Petersburg, was going to Moscow with his wife at the same time as myself, and so we had agreed to meet and lionize the famous old city together. It was of course a great advantage to me, for not only had I very pleasant friends, whose company was a joy, but I also benefited by certain special permits with which they were armed. What treasures we saw!—gold, silver, precious stones and pearls. What holy relics did Boris have to kiss!—not that he, as an advanced Greek, had much faith in them or in their miracles; his reverence for them was something like that of Naaman the Syrian, when he prayed that if he should enter the house of Rimmon with his master leaning upon his hand, he might be forgiven for bowing himself down because it was a question of duty.

The French in 1812 looted as much as they could, but on their approach the treasures and relics were sent off to Novgorod. They must, in spite of all precautions, have found a great deal, for the wealth of the churches is prodigious. One holy Saint stopped their robberies by a miracle. The ruffians were about to rifle his tomb when the corpse slowly lifted its hand in warning. They fled, terror-stricken at the sign, but the dead hand remained raised, a threat for ever against sacrilege.

It is really no matter of surprise that there should be so few buildings of great antiquity, so few ancient historical monuments in Russia. It is true that at Kief, the old capital of the Grand Princes, Jaroslav built the stone church of St. Sophia in the middle of the eleventh century, about the same time as the Conqueror built the Tower of London, but it was not until the middle of the seventeenth century that houses of stone began to be the fashion. Till

then the dwellings of rich and poor alike were built of wood upon piles, much like the homes of their Scythian forbears, described by Herodotus. As a consequence fire had freedom of destruction, as it has in many great Oriental cities, where I have seen whole quarters burned to ashes in a single night; and so it was that when Ivan, the son of Daniel, established his capital at Moscow in 1330, it was no more than a great aggregation of wooden houses, the only stone building being the Church of Spas na Bory (the Saviour on the Cross), which was said to be of immense antiquity.

It was not until the end of the fourteenth century that Dmitri Donski, the conqueror of the Tartars on the Don, began building the famous Kremlin.* By degrees came trade, and merchants from all parts of the world, bartering their goods against Muscovite furs, cloth, linen and leather, for which Russia had already become famous.

In the middle of the sixteenth century, during the reign of Ivan the Terrible, two great fires almost annihilated the city. The first broke out in the merchants' quarter and the second burned the Tsar's palace to cinders. The infuriated populace laid both these fires to the account of the witchcraft of Princess Glinski, the widow of a man who had died in prison, after his eyes had been put out as a punishment for having rebuked Ivan's mother, Helen, for her conduct with her lover, Ortchina. One of the supposed witch's sons was murdered with his followers at an altar on which they had taken refuge for sanctuary, and the wretched woman herself fled for her life with her other son. What an easy matter revenge was in the days when men believed in witchcraft?

But in spite of fires and Poles and other misfortunes, Moscow continued to flourish in ever-increasing beauty, until at the beginning of the eighteenth century Peter the Great, in love with the sea and with ships, must needs transfer the seat of government to his newly-founded seaport, and so gave the death-blow to the political, or perhaps it would be more true to say the official, importance of the old capital. But there was more than the intoxication of the sea in his move. So long as Moscow should remain unrivalled on a pinnacle of glory, so long would the old faith and the glamour of

* A Tartar word signifying "Citadel."

old traditions remain as an obstacle to the Germanizing reforms which he had at heart. These old feelings—which he knew how to turn to profit at his need, while he affected to despise them—must be swept away. As a stronghold of the Church the Sacred City—Moscow and the Patriarchate—had even in the most savage days stood between the Tsar and his will. Let them perish! So the Court and the Government were gone, and the Patriarchate with them. But all these changes—the plucking of beards literally and figuratively from men's chins, the wholesale attack upon all those customs which were dearest to the Russian soul—were in one respect a failure. The dignity, the sanctity of Moscow remained untouched. No spark of its sacred light was extinguished. To every true child of Russia Moscow remained the Holy Mother. Witness 1812. Napoleon would have met with a less fierce opposition had he attacked St. Petersburg. That would have been warfare. What Peter did was sacrilege. It was a pious Russian, Rostopchin, who once more set fire to Moscow lest the sacred city with its stores of provisions and necessaries should fall into the hands of the impious invader. What a difference that fire made to the horrors of the terrible retreat!

No Russian sees the towers of the holy city in the distance without reverently baring his head and crossing himself, and even the guards in the railway trains keep a sharp look-out lest they should fail to make the prescribed obeisance at the first coming into sight of the venerated towers and steeples. The Russian is sensitive, impressionable and romantic above any people with which I have come in contact. The religion, the poetry, the music and the traditions of his country are the very essence of his nature, fibres interwoven round one centre, which is to him as his own heart, and that centre is Moscow.

There was one man living in Moscow whom I was most anxious to see: M. Gerebzoff, the author of "La Civilisation en Russie." He was famous as a man of letters, known, moreover, as a typical gentleman of the old school, who had never bowed before the altars of St. Petersburg, but had remained absolutely faithful to the traditions of what he conceived to be the glorious past of his country. Prince Galitzin, who knew him, very good-naturedly asked him to

tea one evening to meet me. He came with two or three others—men of the same kidney as himself—and we had a most interesting talk. He had the appearance of a very old man, though in truth he was hardly past middle-age; but his infirmities added long years to his reckoning, and he was nearly stone blind; physically he was weak, but mentally full of activity, enthusiasm and prejudices—just as I had imagined him. What added to the interest of his conversation was the fact that he had been writing a book on England, full of admiration for our institutions and methods. But Boris Galitzin knew that I should be eager to hear him talk about his own country, so he deftly turned the conversation to the question of the capital.

"St. Petersburg!" exclaimed M. Gerebzoff, "a mere marsh, just fit to harbour frogs and wolves and Finns. You must not imagine"—turning to me—"that in St. Petersburg you can come to any true opinion about Russia," and then he went off at score. Even Moscow he would not admit to be the true capital for his country. Kief would be the most advantageous metropolis. His argument was this. The theory of a capital is that every native of the country should look upon it as *his*. Moscow is to Vladimir and Kief what St. Petersburg is to Moscow—a modern imposition. Moscow might be the official capital, but the native of Little Russia would still look upon the ancient Kief as *his* capital. But if Kief were the seat of government, Petersburger, Muscovite, Volhynian, Podolian, White Russian, and perhaps even at last Pole, would loyally rally round the old mother-city. The spirit of separation would be exorcized, and there would be one Russia with one language and one mind. This was no new idea of which M. Gerebzoff held the patent. Many Russians had professed the same faith, especially the violent nationalists.

At the same time it must be remembered that to an enormous majority of their countrymen Moscow is so intimately bound up with the great crises of their fatherland, such as the occupation by the Poles and their expulsion, and the episode of 1812, and so venerated as the high altar of their faith, that Kief as a capital, in spite of all its sanctity and its remote antiquity, can never in their opinion be more than an academic problem. I have given here a

very brief *précis* of M. Gerebzoff's talk. But I could wish that some of our statesmen who seem to advocate a return to the Heptarchy could have heard his eloquent advocacy of a united empire. As to that when I was in Russia there were no two schools, no two opinions.

Of all the strangely quaint buildings in Moscow—perhaps of the world—the most arresting is the Church of Vassili Blagennii, standing at the entrance to the Kremlin; it was erected by Ivan the Terrible in honour of Basil, the crazy monk of Moscow—the only man who ever dared to rebuke him—and of the victory which wrested Kazan from the Tartars in 1554. Designed by one madman at the command of a second and to the glory of a third, it looks as if it had been planned in an ecstatic mood by the capricious fantasy of King Oberon's court architect. One can picture to oneself his craftsmen, gnomes, trolls and Nibelungen, busily at work sawing, planing, hammering; shaping stones, beating out iron and gold and silver and copper; fashioning pinnacles and cupolas and towers into weird forms and grotesque combinations; making up a structure unlike anything in Heaven or upon earth, baffling description—something to make a man rub his eyes in wonder and ask himself whether it can be reality or a dream of ghost-land. Clearly the work of a man gay, happy, unrestrained, laughing at all prescribed rule and convention. Strange to say, this weird Saracenic conception was born in an Italian brain in the days of the Rinascimento!

When it was finished, and men lifted their hands in wonder, the artist in his folly bragged that this was not to be taken as the measure of his powers, or as having dried up the wellspring of his imagination; he could do better yet. An unwise boast which cost him dear; for lest the eccentricities and beauties that he had fathered should ever, as he threatened, be beaten, the Terrible Tsar promptly caused the poor Italian's eyes to be put out. Who can account for the wild whims of fancy? Why should the thought of the savage beauty and fateful sadness of this sacred building bring back to my mind without rhyme or reason the memory of a beautiful mad girl who used to wander singing and dancing in the craziest gyrations through the streets of a little country town in France which I knew as a youngster? The thing would be impossible in these

days. She was very lovely, but in her loveliness, which had been so cruel to her, there was something weird, something remote and mystic and tragic, that seemed to belong to another sphere.

The fascination of this wonder-church must be of the same order. Brilliant beauty, the sad gaiety of madness, the cloud of a cruel tragedy—these make up its story. Memory is like a lute strung with all manner of strange chords. The Church of St. Vassili touched one of them.

The Kremlin is the diadem of the river Moskva as Windsor Castle is the diadem of the Thames. It has its psychological moment, like " fair Melrose." For the one it is the " pale moonlight," for the other if you would " see it aright," crossing the river, you must go to the Sparrows' Hill at sunset, and stand where Napoleon stood, waiting in vain for the keys of the gates of the citadel to be brought to him ; and if you have the luck that I had, to hit upon a glorious setting sun, you will have a sight that will remain with you till your dying day.

No skill of painter could convey the faintest idea of its strange beauty, varying as it does from minute to minute ; bathed in a flood of golden sunshine, the flame-coloured walls and towers and grotesquely-shaped steeples and belfries of the Kremlin are a blaze of burnished metal, like the crown of some huge Gargantuan hero ; then, as the sun lowers on the horizon, they begin, like the dying dolphins of fable, to flash out chameleon tints of all the colours of the rainbow ; gradually the rosy pink steals over them, just as it does over the snowy points of the high Alps, fading into the cold violet—not the darkness—of a night almost as luminous as day, against which the sharp lines stand out with a severity altogether foreign to their fantastic beauty. The chill serenity of a nightless night gives a new aspect to the barbaric splendour of the mighty citadel. For the moment the stilly peace casts a holy spell even over the memory of Ivan the Terrible.

Only for the moment ; for the devilish spirit of the Tsar seems to haunt all Moscow. Wherever you may go, you are reminded of him and of his horrors. You are taken to see the Romanoff House, the home of Mikhail Feodorovitch, the founder of the present dynasty, a perfect specimen of a great Boyarin's house at the

beginning of the seventeenth century, instinct with the spirit of the Orient; low, vaulted rooms, the ceilings and walls covered with frescoes and arabesques of curious designs. The doors are very low, for cunning old Nikita Romanoff, grandfather of the first Tsar of his race, was determined that those who entered his house or his presence should do proper obeisance; even the lady of the party, not a tall woman, had to bend nearly double as she crept in. Everything is kept in religious order: all the furniture, down to the very toys with which the future Tsar used to play. One hardly expected to see a relic of Ivan here. Yet even in this Romanoff family shrine is preserved his staff, an ingeniously cruel weapon, the top fashioned as a huge bird, with which in playful moods he would fell an unfortunate courtier or two, and the ferrule a sharpened point of iron, with which, leaning upon it with all his weight, he would pierce the foot of some wretch whom he called up for a close and familiar conversation, pinning him to the floor. Strange caresses! The barbarities to which great nobles and courtiers were submitted pass all belief. There is a little tower in the Kremlin from which Ivan would look down upon the great square below and feast his eyes upon the tortures of his victims, tortures ordered by himself and in which he would sometimes lend a hand. The treacheries of some of his towns—Novgorod, Volkof, Pleskof, Tver and Moscow itself, accused of intriguing with the Poles—gave him a fine opportunity for indulging in his favourite pastimes.

As for the guilty traitors of Novgorod, they were driven into a huge inclosed pen, and Ivan, with his eldest son, rode in and speared them like wild boars till they were tired of the sport! And yet, in spite of all that is true in these stories, and perhaps of much more that is legendary, he does not seem to have left an unpopular memory behind him—indeed, I have heard Russians speak kindly and almost affectionately of this fiend as a sort of jovial *viveur* rather than as a tyrant to be execrated. As for Peter the Great, he frankly admired him and, making allowance for the difference in centuries, imitated him; no doubt he would have gone further had he dared, but times had changed, and there was a limit even to his audacity.

There is a new dynasty and a new capital, but the memory of

Ivan the Fourth is yet green and, strange to say, it is not hideous. There was, no doubt, a certain picturesqueness about him, as there was about our own Henry the Eighth, who dealt out death with no niggard hand, and who still, in story and legend, lives as a sort of hero. A strong man of arms always awakens a certain admiration, and no doubt it was a fine sight for the citizens of Moscow to see the fierce Tsar ride out bare-headed through the Saviour's Gates at the head of his splendidly caparisoned *strelzi* and *spritchniki* (archers and bodyguard). Tailors and saddlers and armourers are rare makers of fame.

With what wise judgment and loving care the Russians preserve their old monuments! Where any restoration is needed it is carried out with such discreet skill that it is almost impossible to detect the new from the old, and so the approach to the Kremlin through the Spasskia Vorotui (the Saviour's Gates), with their beautiful tower, leads to a succession of pictures which are not fragments of the old world clumsily pieced together, but the sixteenth century itself, whole, sound and without a blemish. Bare your head as you go through these mystic gates, for even the Emperor of all the Russias dare not pass them covered. Inside the court of the Palace of the Tsars stands the ancient Church of the Saviour on the Cross, and here were gathered quite a little crowd of pilgrims—for this is a very holy place—listening with intense devoutness to the words of one of their number, who, with all the fervour of an ancient Hebrew prophet, was telling, in language so picturesque that it seemed almost inspired, the story of a miracle which had befallen him on his travels.

As he was tramping, weary and footsore, from some distant province to worship at the shrines of Moscow, the Blessed Virgin appeared to him on the road, and bidding him to be of good cheer, encouraged him to march on to the end of his pious journey. What was hunger, what was fatigue in comparison with the holy joy which awaited him? One envies the simple, unreasoning faith of these humble folk; it would be still more enviable if it possessed a stronger moral influence upon character; but, alas! I have already shown how much too often it comes to a dead halt in the realm of superstition. A little while later in the afternoon I saw

a pious pilgrim—pious he must have been, or he would not have faced the hardships and cost of the journey—staggering dead drunk on his return from the shrines ; but even so he did not forget to remove his cap as he passed through the sacred Gates of the Saviour. Explain it who will, the *mujik* honestly and reverently offers himself body and soul to his God, and yet it never occurs to him that he is defiling and degrading the gift. Fancy a man dragging through the mud a rose which he is to lay at the feet of his beloved !

" Tchto vam ugodno ? Tchto vam ugodno ? " (" What d'ye lack ? What d'ye lack ? "). The very cry of the madcap city 'prentices in the " Fortunes of Nigel." What a picture Sir Walter Scott would have painted of the Gastinnii Dvor (the Strangers' Bazaar) ! Such a collection of wares of all sorts, from a worn-out hearth-brush of which the last bristle has long since departed, to a diamond brooch which, perhaps, a few nights before was glittering on some fair lady's breast ; from the dirty, worn-out kaftan of a *mujik* to a ball-dress of silk and satin. Such bargainings, such fights for the last odd kopeck. And then the cajoleries of these Muscovite hucksters ! There is something truly touching in being appealed to as " *Golubtchik* " (" My little dove ") in the hope of softening the hardness of one's heart.

Altogether a wonderful place, in which were to be found all manner of commodities, some good, some bad, some mere trash, with here and there a really valuable thing, probably stolen, of the worth of which the dealer is profoundly ignorant, and which he will sell for a song. In one tray you may see a whole jumble of odds and ends—keys without locks, locks without keys, brass-headed nails, knife handles, glass beads—and with them, perhaps, an old enamel, a rare coin, a costly jewel, rather astonished to find themselves in such out-at-elbows company. As a rule the meaner the rubbish, the shabbier the article, the longer the battle over the pence.

If the " little dove " is firm he may often fly away with some really precious bargain. That, of course, is a rare chance, but at any rate he will have had a good deal of fun for his money, and a sight of trade in one of its most picturesque shapes. Petticoat Lane is clean by comparison, but an artist would find more to draw

here. There are plentiful opportunities for the etching-needle of a Rembrandt, for the brush of a Hogarth.

However fascinating may be the street scenes in this kaleidoscope of a city, there comes a moment when one must eat. Prince Galitzin had ordered luncheon at the Loskutnii Traktir (the Rubbish-shop Restaurant),. in spite of its name a very famous eating-house (the name, by the bye, was well in tune with the market which I have just described) and the perfection of luxury.

The waiters were models; they were dressed from head to foot in spotless white linen, changed twice a day. The shirt was worn Russian fashion, outside the trousers and bound in at the waist by a girdle. They themselves were as clean as soap and hot water and steam baths could make them; so spick and span and so welcoming that it was a pleasure to be served by them. They most persuasively pressed each dish upon us, and seemed quite hurt if our appetites could not be of a size with our eyes and their wishes.

The fare was excellent. A *zakuska* of raw salted salmon and the greyest of caviare—such caviare as you cannot procure even at St. Petersburg, for it loses quality with every hour's journey from the Volga—a baby radish or two and a glass of liqueur—that much for an *apéritif*; then the serious business of luncheon. First little patties of fish, jelly and eggs, chopped very fine, served with water in which the fish had been boiled for a sauce; then a stew of sturgeon, crayfish, olives, cucumbers and red toadstools, quite delicious; and for the last a very fine sterlet *à la Russe*, as dainty a dish as could be laid before a king. Our drink was *lompopo*, a cup made of beer, lemon, spices and a huge toast of black bread, burned almost to charcoal, lying at the bottom of the tankard. A glass of Château Yquem and a cup of the finest yellow tea (caravan tea) to top up with. That was an excellent luncheon, and moreover, honestly Muscovite, quite in the picture.

Rested and refreshed, we betook ourselves once more to the Kremlin, to feast our eyes upon all those marvels which have been so well catalogued by Murray and by Baedeker that the mere wanderer may look without feeling compelled to undergo the torments of description. One thing struck me. Of Napoleon there are many memories, none more significant, none more

poignant, here or elsewhere than the placing by the Emperor Nicholas of the statue of the beaten Emperor opposite to that of his conqueror, Alexander the First.

Gladly would I have spent many days in the old city—days, aye, and weeks—for it has a singular fascination; moreover, I would have given much to have had some dealings with its society, a society, by all accounts, quite different from that of Peter's capital, which, charming, kindly and hospitable as it is, must always be, from its official position, more or less cosmopolitan. Moscow, on the other hand, is, or was at that time, an atmosphere—absolutely itself, untinged by any modern desecration of conventional foreign manners and customs.

I know not whether it be so still, but in the days of which I am writing one felt that one was seeing the Russian *boyarin* in his own home, just as in Scotland sixty years ago, before the invasion of Americans and stockbrokers, it was a joy to visit a Highland chieftain in his unimproved ancestral castle. There, again, was an atmosphere. But my stay in Moscow—indeed, in Russia—was drawing to a close; the hours of one of the holidays of my life were numbered; but before going back to the workaday world I, too, must make a pilgrimage. Should I take scrip and staff and bottle, sew cockle-shells on my coat—which would be very un-Russian—and start off on my sandalled feet? The train leaving Moscow at 6.30 a.m. would be better; commonplace and modern, but convenient.

One of the greatest of Russia's saints, held in repute higher than most, is St. Sergius. Many are the wonders and miracles that are recorded of him. Before he was born, when his mother received the sacrament his shouts of joy could be heard all over the church. At his birth he could recite the Ten Commandments and the Lord's Prayer by heart. As wise as he was pious, in the early part of the fourteenth century, he drew to himself a great following, and was even an adviser of the famous Dmitri of the Don, whose victory over the Tartars in the expedition undertaken by his advice he announced to his monks on the day and at the hour of its occurreuce. It was in the year 1330 that he founded his

great monastery, the Troitzkaia Lavra (the Monastery of the Trinity), about forty miles from Moscow, and when, to the sorrow of all men, he died and was canonized, his own name was added to that of his foundation, it became known as the Troitzkaia Sergiefskaia Lavra, and the fame of St. Sergius was established for all time.

The Monks of the Trinity played a great and a noble part in the history of their country, especially during the Polish war at the beginning of the seventeenth century. Frocked heroes they were, against whom all the craft, the valour and the money of their enemies were of no avail. The siege had to be raised; and when after three years the Russians rose against the Poles, who were in possession of Moscow, after a time of tribulation and misery untold, the monks joined the forces of Minin and Pojarski, and even sold their treasures to help in driving the hated Pole from Russian soil. Once more they were in vain besieged in 1615, and it was under the impregnable walls of the convent which had done such loyal service to Russia that the treaty of peace with Poland was signed. The designs of the Poles had been religious as well as political had they prevailed, Russia would have fallen under the spiritual dominion of the Pope. So the monks were warring for very existence, and they fought stubbornly.

Even Peter the Great, a scoffer by profession, expressed, and no doubt felt, a sincere veneration for St. Sergius. It was a picture of the Saint which was carried with him as his standard in all his battles, and sooth to say, Peter owed no small debt of gratitude to the brave monks. His early years were not very rosy. He was but ten years old when his eldest brother, Feodor, died childless, leaving the succession to Peter, to the prejudice of a witling elder brother, Ivan. Their sister Sophia made this the pretext for a revolution to which she excited the strelzi (literally "archers"), a sort of irregular soldiery, and with their help assumed the regency. In 1789 he felt himself strong enough to call upon her to resign.

The whole story forms an interesting episode in the history of the country, but there is no space to tell it here; I only allude to it because it was in this monastery that Peter and his poor weak brother Ivan found a refuge until, the strelzi turning round upon

Sophia, Peter assumed the government and she was sent into a convent, where she might again weave plots to her heart's content. So it was gratitude that prompted his reverence for the Saint and his monks, and as I imagine they gained no small amount of prestige from his support. However that may be, great is the fame of the place. It was a festival of the church, and though the train was pretty full at starting, we picked up many worshippers at intermediate stations, till we were quite a crowd.

The Lavra stands upon a hill, and with its picturesque towers and spires rising above its venerable battlemented walls, looks like an ancient feudal city, of which the suburbs are formed by the tea-houses, grog-shops and booths for the sale of toys and sacred images clustered round its base. Here the faithful congregate after worshipping at the shrines, and a thriving trade is done in refreshments, chiefly liquid and strong above proof, and it must be a poor pilgrim indeed who does not carry back with him a toy or two as fairings for the children, or an *ikona* for the good wife.

There were several hundreds of men and women toiling wearily up the hill at the same time as ourselves. The women were in travelling outfit, their faces bound round with kerchiefs, only the nose and eyes showing, their short skirts reaching just below the knee, and both men and women had their legs thickly swathed round with linen bands, tied together with pieces of string, and their feet encased in shapeless shoes contrived out of coarse matting. The better-to-do pilgrims carried knapsacks, while their less fortunate fellows had but their staves, with, at most, a small wallet, trusting to chance and charity for a meal or a night's lodging. It was a mixed crowd, for besides these humbler folk there were prosperous farmers and tradesmen, whose *telegas* and carts were standing outside the gates, making the space look like the halting-place of a vast caravan. Plutocrats and grandees were not wanting, and the numberless beggars and cripples of whom we had to run the gauntlet gathered a rich harvest of coppers and small silver coins.

We entered the gates at the same moment as an old grey-beard, tottering on his staff, wan and weary, worn out with the long journey on foot from a distant part of Russia, so feeble that nothing

but the intoxication of fanaticism could have carried him on to its end. Inside the gates were more beggars, but these were apparently collectors for the monastery, for I noticed that a reverend brother was going his rounds among them, peering into the contents of the little tin plates to see that there should be no alienation of alms for private purposes. I felt rather indignant at this, but it occurred to me afterwards that the idea might be simply to pool all the receipts, that the fraternity of beggars might all share and share alike.

Swiftly a serving brother laid hold of us; he was half, if not wholly, an idiot, and having an impediment in his speech, promised to be very troublesome; but a jolly little monk coming up delivered us from our tormentor and sent him about his business. He invited us into his cell and offered to act as our cicerone. His humble home was tiny and neat and scrupulously clean—one might have eaten off the floor. In one corner before the ikona (sacred image), a little lamp was burning. His furniture consisted of a white sofa-bed, two chairs and a cupboard. The little window, on the sill of which he had the luxury of a sweet-scented verbena and a pot of mignonette—one of those touches of poetry which make the whole world akin—looked out upon a very pretty view of the monastery garden fringed by the woods beyond.

The dear little man made us very welcome, and gave us each a rude print of St. Sergius as a remembrance of the monk Vaccian and of the Troitzkaia Lavra. He made me write down his name in my pocket-book, and then I must write mine for him. To my amazement, for I had written it in the Russian character, he had to spell it painfully, letter by letter. Print he could read fairly well, and of course the old Slavonic script of the liturgies. But writing, and the reading of the written character, were beyond his capabilities. Indeed, during the seven hours that I spent with him and his brethren, I was continually being struck by the proofs of the most crass and darkest ignorance. Beyond the four walls of their convent they knew nothing, absolutely nothing. One of them asked me whether England was not supplied with gold by Russia. When I alluded to California and Australia, they had never heard of either. They knew that there was a

place called America, and another quite unimportant place called India, but what they were, to whom they belonged, or by whom they were peopled—that was a blank.

One's ideas of the monasteries of the olden time were of sacred institutions where in an age of ignorance the holy fire of learning was kept alight; here, and apparently in similar places, were castles of indolence, refuges to which men might fly from the cares and duties of mankind, contented to be supplied with the barest necessaries of life at the public expense, adding thereto a few scanty comforts by the kindness of some passing stranger.

Every monk received at the refectory one meal a day, consisting of vegetable soup, fish, bread, vegetables and kvass. If they ate anything else in the day it must be at their own expense. They were allowed twenty roubles (£3 at that time) a year out of which they must clothe themselves. Some had a little something of their own wherewith to eke out this pittance; others managed to pick up a trifle now and again as guides to visitors; others had nothing. There were in all three hundred and fifty brethren. The admission to the order was simple enough; any man was eligible if only he could show that he had a vocation. The monks had free egress and ingress, and might even obtain a week's leave of absence from the Archimandrite. A curious, unproductive life. Such talents as there might be were hidden in napkins!

Of course we visited all the churches and shrines; but what interested me most were the pilgrims. It was impossible not to be touched by the very real fervour of their piety. To see the tears streaming down the cheeks of great bearded men when they kissed the face of Saint Sergius, covered only by a cloth of red velvet and gold, made me feel ashamed of my stiff-necked apathy. The worshippers moved me, the worshipped did not.

Had the French only known what was immediately under their hand in 1812, what prizes they might have carried off! The reliquaries and vestments, the bushels upon bushels of precious stones and pearls. The treasury of the monastery must represent a fabulous wealth in the offerings of Emperors and Empresses, Princes and Princesses, and rich folk of lesser degree.

One jewel was, if not a miracle, as it is reputed to be, at any

rate a world's wonder. Picture to yourself an agate medallion mounted in huge diamonds, the staining of the agate representing the figure of a monk kneeling in worship before the crucifix. Even the eyes of the monk visible, two little white specks in the blackness of the stone. I held this wonder in my hand and examined it as closely as I could; but in vain did I try to discover any trace of possible fraud. I have seen and read of many freaks of nature; none of its kind, I think, so strange as this.

There was much to be seen in the Lavra—the refectory of the monks, their carefully-tended garden, and above all the grand old battlements, twenty-one feet broad, from which we could look down on the surrounding country and see the advancing hordes of Poles, hear the war cries of assailants and besieged, listen to the din of battle and to the triumphant hymns of the cowled warriors giving glory to God for the victory.

But we had more ground to cover, so after a visit to a neighbouring *traktir*, where brother Vaccian made himself exceedingly comfortable, we drove off with him to a most curious hermitage, or perhaps I should rather say monastery, about four versts off —religion in its most repellent shape. The church and cells are underground, so we bought tapers to light us down the dark, slimy steps. How can men inhabit such dens? How can men think that in so doing they are pleasing the God who has given them the pure air and the canopy of heaven. To me it seemed a sacrilege. I went into one of the empty cells and measured it—nine feet by six; only in the centre was the vaulted roof high enough for me to stand with my hat on. All the furniture a stove, a pallet and an ikona; the only ornament a black cross painted on the roof. The water was literally streaming down the walls.

In such a den as this fanatics will live for years without the light of day and without air; their only communication with the outer world is by means of the serving brother who brings their food and cleans (save the mark!) their cells. Their days are passed in contemplation, and in reading the lives of the saints by the dim light of a taper. The liturgies of the Church they only hear through a tiny window, like the lepers' squints in our own country, which during Mass is thrown open to the church

that the cells surround. I asked if these holy men received visitors, as I should have liked to have had some talk with them, but I was told that they only received the Emperor, the Empress and the Metropolitan. If they must have company, apparently it has to be of the very best.

How sweet the pine woods smelt in the soft, delicious air of spring after these noisome holes at which a well-conditioned toad would turn up his nose! There was more to be done yet, for the place seemed to be a perfect colony of Holiness. At a little distance there dwelt an old monk, who after ten years spent in one of those hideous cells (ten years! it makes one shudder to think of it!) had reached such a pinnacle of piety that he was now accredited by the wondering mujiks with the power of performing miracles. He was not a very old man, as we were told, but so broken down with infirmity, bred rather of privations than of years, that he could hardly raise himself on his couch to receive us. Strikingly handsome, and of rare distinction, with long grizzly hair and beard, he was the ideal of St. Jerome. He was not unwilling to talk; but his mind was wandering, his speech incoherent, and he seemed relieved when I bade him farewell.

I was afraid that if I offered any little gift to so saintly a personage he would be affronted, so on leaving I put a trifle in the hand of the attendant who kept the pretty little cottage. He begged me to go back and lay it on the hermit's table. He was lying back apparently exhausted, but at the sight of the silver he revived, and gave every sign of pleasure and gratitude.

Close by is one of those austere monasteries into which no female may enter; but we had seen enough, so we drove back to the Lavra, there to await the train which should carry us back to Moscow. By this time a good many of the pilgrims who were merrymaking among the booths outside the walls were very drunk indeed. They had washed down their piety with vodka, and when the effects of that should have passed off, would be ready once more to face the world, the flesh, and the devil, with that added reputation for holiness which is the privilege of the Hadji in every land.

It had been a full and an interesting day, to the pleasure of which

our good little monk Vaccian had contributed not a little; but I could have wished that when I said good-bye, leaving with him the wherewithal to buy a few little comforts, he had not in the profusion of his gratitude insisted on kissing as well as blessing me, for indeed his person was not kept with the same scrupulous cleanliness as his cell. The blessing was good; the kissing less so; but it had to be endured, so I tried not to make a wry face over it.

The next day was the last of my delightful stay at Moscow. Dreamily I wandered alone through the streets, a purposeless vagabond, and rather mournful, for I would fain have remained much longer. I carefully eschewed sightseeing, for I was anxious to fix on my mind what I had already seen, and that could best be achieved by gathering a general impression of the peculiar features of the city.

On the 24th of May I reached St. Petersburg and almost immediately left for London. I brought away with me a store of happy memories, especially the cherished remembrance of Lord and Lady Napier. Of Russia I felt as if I must take my leave, full of gratitude for boundless hospitality and kindness, in her own pretty formula "Forgive!"

Many years after the betrayal of Denmark, when I was Secretary of the Office of Works, I was once more, to my great delight, associated officially with my old chief. Mr. Nelson, the famous Edinburgh publisher, had very generously offered to pay the cost of certain improvements and restorations at Edinburgh Castle. Lord Napier and I were appointed members of a committee to consider the plans and proposals. One fine afternoon, after the meeting of the committee, we were walking down the hill together, when we began talking of the old St. Petersburg days. He was full of fun and merriment, laughing over the old memories. At last I said:

"Do you remember that dismal night in February, 1864, when you sent for me to decipher the telegram that decided the fate of Denmark?"

"Yes, indeed," was the answer.

"And do you remember your journey to Tsarskoe Selo the next morning and what Prince Gortchakoff said to you."

"No," said Lord Napier, "I don't remember *that*," with a strong emphasis on the *that*—but there came into his eyes the old merry twinkle that I loved to see. He would not give away Lord Russell, whom he loved, even to me who knew the whole story, but the laughter in his tell-tale eyes spoke volumes. Nobody suffered more than Lord Napier occasionally did from the diplomatic vagaries of his old chief. But I think that he looked upon him as a sort of superlunary political saint, not to be measured by the standards applicable to the ordinary commonplace Secretary of State.

On my way home I stopped at Berlin, which was in a fever of excitement and self-glorification. Two of the most formidable military Powers of Europe, having joined forces, had succeeded in crushing little Denmark. Prussia was triumphant, the Mark beside itself with martial elation. Trophies of war were stacked in public places, poor little old-fashioned smooth-bore cannons, not much better than toys, which had been all that the brave Danes had had for the defence of their Dannewerke. The officers, "unscarred braggarts," who had fought (save the word!) in this noble warfare each wore a white silk band round the sleeve of his tunic, rattling his sabre with all the conscious pride of heroism, while the fair-haired maidens fell down in worship before the majesty of the War God. Surely since the world began there never was so much cry over such a paltry ploc of wool. But your Prussian Junker can outboast creation!

Two more days, and then back to the Foreign Office.

CHAPTER XIV

1864

THE FIRST CALL OF THE EAST

THE year 1864 is sacred to me in that, although it called me away from St. Petersburg, where I was so happy, it also called me to my first taste—a mere glimpse—of that East which, old man as I am, still casts its spell over me. When the time came for my holiday—not till October—I had six weeks before me which I could call my own. It happened that at that moment a messenger was wanted for Constantinople; I saw my chance and volunteered. Vienna first, then down the Danube to the Black Sea. Mr. (afterwards Sir Arthur) Cowell Stepney was my companion. A wonderful journey, where language and costume carry the traveller back to the days of Trajan, and the very names of the places are full of romance. "Unde es, amice?" asks a Wallach, recognizing a friend—and invites him to sit at the same "mensa" (not "tavola" or "table") with him, and rates the waiter because the cloth is not as "albo" (not "blanc" or "bianco") as it should be. The peasants, shaggy, bearded and untrimmed, were dressed in tunics, fur caps, leggings and sandals, exactly like the prisoners on Trajan's arch. Fifty years ago the Latinity had been preserved in far greater purity in Wallachia than in the true Latin countries, and poverty of communication had prevented the demon of fashion from destroying the old picturesque national costume.

A troglodyte colony of Circassians at Czernavoda, burrowing in the earth like rabbits, a colony of Tartars herded in a loathsome mud town, the gift of the Sultan to the Crim Tartars, seemed like creatures from another hemisphere. Here we had some trouble

with certain tatterdemalion nondescripts who represented the Turkish authorities. They wanted to open my Foreign Office bags. I rebelled; but knowing no Turkish, and they being equally ignorant of any other language, the case seemed hopeless, when all of a sudden I remembered Lord Stratford de Redcliffe. Kinglake furnished me with the word of salvation. "Eltchi, Eltchi!" I shouted, "touch my bags if you dare, you infernal scoundrels!" The last words, except as ornaments, were pleonastic as abuse generally is. "Sesame" itself had not more magic than the first. My canvas bags became an object of veneration—the great seal as sacred as that of King Solomon in the days of his glory.

At Kustendji we took ship, and after a stormy passage in that cruel sea the name of which had to be changed in order to propitiate its evil demons, made our way, like Jason and his Argonauts, through the Kuaneai Symplegades, the dark, floating rocks between which the very dove that they sent out as pioneer lost her tail, and found ourselves in the Bosphorus, the identical bull's ferry across which that wicked old god Zeus carried the lovely Europa. We were now in the midst of the scenes made famous by Homer and Hesiod; the home of gods and heroes, the land in which all the poetry and all the romance of the Western world was born.

Beautiful is Constantinople, the great city of palaces, mosques, minarets and cypresses; but how much more beautiful must that paradise have been under the dispensation of Olympus, before the unspeakable Turk, and the hardly more speakable Christian of those parts, had made it the centre of their ignoble tussles, intrigues, cruelties, robberies and murders!

The day had not long broken when on a dismal morning—October 4th—we escaped from a polychrome and polyglot crowd which besieged our ship, and following our luggage borne by sturdy Hamals, made our way through mud and slosh up the Grande Rue de Pera to Misseri's Hotel. There was a magic in the name, for had not old Misseri been made famous by Kinglake? Was he not, *longo intervallo*, the second hero of that immortal book "Eothen?" And was he not himself grown rich and fat and well-liking, a Pasha of many tales, and all of them in honour of his old master, whom he loved, and whom I was only to know many years later?

When I had ridden to Therapia and deposited my bags at the British Embassy, where Mr. William Stuart was then the Ambassador's vicegerent, I went back to Constantinople. Stuart was an excellent official, famous for having penetrated all those arcana of cookery in which Brillat Savarin himself was not a greater adept. It is a study well worth the attention of diplomatists, for who can say what difficulties an excellent dinner has not smoothed over? And here let me, in passing, pay a tribute to my greatest living friend among British Ambassadors, the prince of modern diplomatists and experts in dining as a fine art. But I will say no more, lest I should be suspected of fishing for an invitation—if only a sea which I am never likely again to cross did not lie between him and me that might be possible; as it is, I can meet accusation with firmness.

Of course we went to see all the sights of Stamboul—*non ragionam di lor*. What delighted me far more than the mosques, the dancing and howling dervishes, the tombs of magnificent Sultans, and all the stock-in-trade of the dragoman, was wandering through by-ways in the city, happening upon out-of-the-way, unsuspected, picturesque nooks and corners—above all, certain old graveyards, with their quaint turbaned memorial stones, over which the tall, solemn cypresses mount reverent guard—warders watching over the peace of the dead Moslem. There was one such cemetery hard by a tiny mosque, on one side of which the jealously latticed window of a harem looked out, and I could picture to myself Amina the ghoul, stealing out of her prison in the dark hours of the night to practise her unholy rites among the mouldering dead. There were still places in Constantinople where, far from the madding crowd of frock-coated modernity, the glamour of the East retained its power.

One sight I am glad to have seen, and that was on Friday, the 7th of October, the Sultan Abdul Aziz going to the mosque. There was a great crowd of carriages full of ladies, and all the principal ministers and officers of State. The Sultan looked tired and intensely bored, as well he might, for already his extravagances had brought upon him ceaseless remonstrances from the other Powers. He began his reign well, industriously paving the road to Hell,

but his paving-stones, excellent as they seemed to be, soon crumbled into dust. He became inoculated with the barbarous lust of military splendour and all those whims and appetites to which Sultans have fallen victims to the undoing of themselves and their people.

The sorry end came twelve years later (in 1876). How it came about remains a mystery of the women's quarters. It was said at the time that a nip from a pair of sharp scissors opened a vein and the wretched man bled to death in the privacy of his own harem. Who did the deed none knew. Was it suicide? Was it a bribed eunuch? Was it one of the ladies? That is immaterial; his death was needed, and he died.

Three notable men were among the high officials in waiting: Aali Pasha, who was said to be greatly under the influence of M. de Moustiers, the French Ambassador; Omar Pasha, the commander-in-chief of the Turkish army in the Crimea in 1855; and Fuad Pasha, who had been Lord Dufferin's colleague on the commission which investigaged the anti-Christian uprising in the Lebanon in 1860. I was glad to see him, for I had heard so much of him from Meade, who accompanied Lord Dufferin as secretary. That was Lord Dufferin's first important mission; and very well he managed it.

When he first took his seat with the colleagues, his extremely youthful appearance made them think that they would be able to do what they pleased with him; they were mistaken; by the third sitting his cleverness and tact, combined with the most exquisite manners and firmness, had made him master of the situation, and his fame as a diplomatist was secured.

Fuad Pasha, like my old friend Khalil Pasha at St. Petersburg, was noted as a wit. A short time before I saw him he gave a ball to which the members of the Corps Diplomatique and their wives were invited. At a certain moment it was arranged that the ladies should go and pay a visit to Madame Fuad in the harem. A pert French *chargé d'affaires* said that he should manage to smuggle himself inside the mystic doors. Fired with this ambition, at the given time he offered his arm to one of the ladies and tried to slip in with her. Fuad Pasha, who was standing by,

stopped him, saying very quietly, " Pardon, mon cher, vous savez que vous n'êtes accrédité qu'auprès de la Porte."

But after all, Constantinople, with its vaunted charms—charms so much vaunted that they have become almost familiar—was no the goal of our ambition. Our aim was to see something of Asia Minor and, above all, to explore the Trojan Plain. The difficulty was, how to get there? At last we heard of a Russian steamer, the *Grand Duke Constantine*, plying between Odessa and Alexandria —a craft as capricious as a fine lady. First she would, and then she wouldn't, take us, and finally, " saying 'no,' consented." But not for two days would she make up her mind to start. At last, on the 12th of October, we steamed away from the Golden Horn, leaving behind us the domes and minarets of Stamboul bathed in all the glory of a sunset that would have made Turner wild with delight, and which sent a whole shipload of Russian pilgrims bound for the Holy Land to their knees, piously crossing themselves at the last sight of St. Sophia, always a sacred shrine to the orthodox, in spite of having been for centuries defiled by the rites of Islam.

On the following morning we landed at the Dardanelles. The Consul was most kind, and helped us in every way. The trouble was that there were no horses to be had, so we spent a wet, stormy day in visiting the civil and military governors. The former was a delightful, fat old gentleman, brother-in-law to Fuad Pasha, with a very merry twinkle in his eye, almost as entertaining as Kinglake's immortal Pasha, whose conversation is recorded in " Eothen." He spoke much about the Prince of Wales, and declared that the Princess was " a gift of cream and honey specially sent by Allah for the good of the English people." Those were the sentiments of the man of peace.

The man of war was not less emphatic over the pipes and coffee. He professed great admiration for Lord Palmerston, Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, and the bagpipes. If ever England should be in trouble Turkey would come to the rescue, with four hundred thousand men, and he would be the man to lead them. But alas! that was fifty-one years ago, in pre-Enver days! What was perhaps more to the purpose, by the help of the two governors we procured horses and a kavass named Hussein, a picturesque warrior bristling with arms,

who was made personally responsible for our safety. The good Misseri had found us an excellent dragoman at Constantinople. I recommended him afterwards to Leighton—not yet President of the Royal Academy—who was delighted with him.

Full of enthusiasm, the old poem stirring us to the very core, we wandered, Homer in hand, among the scenes made sacred for ever by the tale of the ten years' siege. We looked out—as the homesick Greeks did—upon Imbros, Tenedos, Lemnos, Samothrace, and dimly saw far-away Athos; ahead of us was the glorious Ida range. Hardly a step could we take without treading upon broken marble and sherds of pottery, dumb witnesses of the vanished existence of a once teeming population, or probably three tiers of population—the men of King Priam's time, the Romans, the Genoese. All have left their traces, all are now forgotten by the few poverty-stricken Turkish villagers who have ignorantly succeeded to their heritage.

The Scamander, long since diverted from its old course, was peaceful enough when we first crossed it; but there came a great storm, the God descended into the river, and in a couple of hours the sluggish stream had become a wild, tearing flood; to get back was out of the question, and we had to take refuge for the night in a Turkish farm-house, a very filthy haven of rest, or rather no-rest, where we were the prey of creeping and hopping creatures innumerable. In the dead of the night the wind howled, the crazy house shook, and a portion of the ceiling plaster fell upon me, and began, as it seemed, to take unto itself legs and crawl all over me. Furious as the weather was, I jumped up and fled into an outside shed, where, after a bath by moonlight in Scamander, I waited for the dawn, which came at last, breaking into a glorious day, its beauty enhanced a hundredfold by the memory of the horrors of the night.

As we sauntered over the hallowed plain, it needed no great play of the imagination to see the Grecian ships drawn up in line by the seashore; to picture to ourselves the hosts of Europe and Asia facing one another in battle array; to listen to the proud challenges of the leaders acclaimed by the shouts of their men; Ajax, "like the dread Ares in person, striding mightily, in his harness of flashing brass, shaking his long shafted spear;" to see the body of Hector

being dragged in cruel revenge round yonder barrow, which is the tomb of Patroclus ; to feel with the aged King Priam, praying for the ransom of his son's remains ; to mourn over the widowhood of Andromache ! These are the very springs near which Hector was killed, still pouring their runlets of water into the natural basin at which the deep-bosomed Trojan women were wont to wash their linen.

It is good to remember those days spent amid traditions which three thousand years have not sufficed to strip of their glamour. If the plain still seemed to ring with the clash of arms, the slopes and wooded dells of " many fountained " Ida were so lovely, so full of poetry, that I half expected to see them peopled by lovely goddesses and shy dryads, hiding among the oaks and chestnuts and pines. But alas ! Aphrodite, the Queen of Smiles (was she not born in the foam of the countless smiles of the sea ?), has long since forsaken the haunts that she loved when the world was young —maybe the men of to-day are not so attractive as Anchises and Adonis, or as the lovely boy who drew down the chaste Artemis from her crescent in high heaven to steal a kiss on earth. The goddesses remain sedate and unkissing among the clouds of Olympus, and no longer condescend to entrance the solitudes of shepherds, nor plead for the palm of beauty before a mortal judge. But if the goddesses have fled for ever, the sacred groves which they loved still remain full of the magic of their beauty and of the olden time. It is only we who are unworthy to receive the divine afflatus—we degenerate—of the earth, earthy.

That Homer was himself and not a limited liability company of ballad-mongers—that he, too, wandered where we did—is proved by his accurate picture of the landscape of the Troad. Kinglake brings forward the relative positions of Imbros and Samothrace. Poseidon viewed the war from Samothrace, but on the map Imbros stands between it and the Asiatic shore. How was the god's vision not masked ? Then Kinglake looked, and saw that Samothrace towered high above Imbros, so that Poseidon had well chosen his watch-tower. Ida gives what I think is a still better proof that Homer saw—and described what he saw. He could not have been born blind.

Climbing Mount Ida, at first we rode through an enchanted forest, broken up by glades and pastures of rarest beauty, watered by crystal rills springing from the living rock, and babbling their way down to the plain, to join Scamander, through scenes befitting the divine mysteries sung by the poets. Higher up the vegetation becomes less luxuriant and more stern, until it dwindles into mere scrub and finally ceases altogether. Then comes a stiff ascent over loose shingle, up which we had to drag our horses, slipping back a yard for every two yards gained. The stones are bare and almost polished, scarcely so much as a lichen to be seen, but when at last we painfully reached the top of Gargarus, there burst upon our view a carpet of brilliant wild flowers, marking the spot where Here lulled to sleep the mighty Zeus as he sat brooding over the help to be given to Hector and to Troy. It was a war in which the gods themselves took sides, and fought and schemed on behalf of those whom they took under their wings.

Does not Homer tell us how, when Poseidon was helping the Greeks, the Queen of Heaven, the Lady Here, who was also on their side, saw her lord Zeus grimly watching from the heights of Ida over the Trojan host? How to close his eyes and gain time? The God of Sleep she suborns by promising to give him as his bride the beloved of his heart, the youngest of the Graces, fair Pasithae. The Goddess is Queen of all Majesty, yet she has but too good reason to know that Majesty by itself has lost its power over the Cloud-compeller; so she begs of Aphrodite the loan of her cestus, the magic girdle which holds the secret of all those alluring charms which make love irresistible. Armed with this and having Sleep as her ally, she seeks her lord, and with sweet dalliance beguiles him into oblivion on the mountain-top.

"Then the divine earth sent up a carpet thick and soft of newly-budding grass, dew-sprinkled lotos, crocus and hyacinth" (Iliad, XIV.). Homer must have seen this wonder and invented the pretty fable of Here's wiles to account for this unexpected garden of wildings.

To deny Homer or Shakespeare is a crime of high treason against the Majesty of Genius. For my part, in these days of acute criticism, when all faith is shattered and torn to shreds, I am not

ashamed to confess that I am yet old-fashioned enough to believe in Homer, and to love the old fables of the gods and goddesses, call them sun-myths or moon-myths, or what you will. To me Agamemnon, Achilles and Ajax; Priam, Hector, Andromache, Paris and dear, beautiful, naughty Helen, *teterrima belli causa*, are still real actors on the world's stage, who among these glades and forests and sweetly watered dells and plains played their parts in a great drama which has been the joy of countless generations and will be the joy of generations that are yet to come. Of how much pleasure and beauty does not too much learning rob us! Is it not enough that a thing is beautiful? Why turn diamonds into charcoal? If we might reverse the process there would be some sense in it.

At a pass on the top of a spur of the mountain range we came upon an excellent illustration of the eight-hours' system. At a point where caravans cross the mountain there was a little hut with a tiny vegetable garden. It was occupied by three Zebecs, guardians of the peace, and in some fashion customs officers. They divided the twenty-four hours between them. While one slept, another mounted guard, and the third robbed any unarmed travellers who might pass that way. We had luncheon in their hut; the coffee and cigarettes were of the best—manifestly the spoils of the Egyptian. Refreshed and enriched with a store of happy memories, we came down upon the Bay of Adramyttium. The richly wooded gorges of the southern slope of the mountain were, if possible, even more beautiful than the Trojan side. We slept at Ardjelar, and next day took boat to Assos.

We had now left the enchanted haunts of gods and goddesses, the battlefields of heroes, to linger for a while in the footsteps of the Holy Apostles. The Military Pasha at the Dardanelles had given us a letter for the Bimbashi in command, who was very civil and showed us over the ruins of the old Greek town, then said to be the most perfect in existence, but even fifty-one years ago fast disappearing under the hand of the destroyer, who must needs carry off the grand old masonry to build fortifications. The Bimbashi was wrecking the old town with ardour, for our friend the Pasha had written him an indignant despatch complaining

that the hidden treasures which were supposed to exist had not been found, and he begged us to write to the Pasha, assuring him that all search had proved barren and there was no treasure trove.

We were now eager to get on, so, in spite of dismal forebodings from our crew, we insisted on setting sail in an open caique, meaning to reach Aivali as soon as possible; but wind and weather were too much for our poor little craft: we were promptly driven over to Lesbos, and it was forty-eight hours before we managed to reach our destination, after beating about the bay half starved and sleepless.

There was a British Vice-Consul in the place—a Greek—who treated us most kindly, though it was rather a disappointment to two starvelings, after having doubled St. Paul's experience of "a night and day in the deep," to be offered, Turkish fashion, a teaspoonful of jam and a glass of water. However, a bountiful meal followed as soon as it could be cooked. We had a great disappointment about horses; there were none to be had, and it was all the more provoking as we knew that we must be causing much trouble to our good host; but we did not find out till afterwards, and then to our great confusion, that he actually turned his wife and his mother-in-law out of doors in order to lodge us.

The next day at extortionate prices we procured horses and set out for Pergamos, riding through cotton-fields and olive-groves, past a cemetery devoted to the remains of victims murdered by a band of brigands who, until twelve months earlier, had infested that part of the country. But now they themselves had been caught and entered upon the inheritance of their final six feet of earth, so we had no fear. We reached Pergamos that night, a quaint and beautiful old town full of ruins and relics of the past, and lodged in a *khan* which Rembrandt would have etched with delight. What effects he would have produced with the variously and picturesquely dressed men, the camels and the horses, all dimly visible, scarcely more than guessed at, under the half light shed by an old-fashioned horn lantern. In two more days, on the 28th of October, we arrived at Smyrna, where we spent a most delightful week under the auspices of Mr. Cumberbatch, the British Consul.

Before finally parting with our *kavass*, Hussein, we wished to have a photograph of him. To this he strongly objected. Photography was not in those days so common in Turkey, at any rate in the out-of-the-way parts to which he belonged, as it is at present, and he considered that its practice must be in no very remote way connected with black magic; when, on looking into the camera he saw the figures upside down, then he was persuaded that it could not be other than the work of Shaitan. However, at length he was persuaded. He was a merry, picturesque creature, beguiling his time on the march by singing. George, the dragoman, gave me a translation of one of his songs. "The falcon looks to the water, but I cannot see my Lady. She wounds me, but I know not how to cure the wound. The falcon loves to descend upon the peacock, and I long to kiss the white throat of my Lady. She has a knife in her hand; she is about to murder me. Yah! Hah! White are your legs, oh! my Lady!"

October 29th.—I was very anxious to see the monument of Sesostris, a memorial of his victories, described by that beloved old traveller Herodotus, which is at Nif, within reach of Smyrna. A longish excursion. Herodotus mentions two such monuments, but so far as I know only this one has been discovered. We started at five o'clock in the morning with Mr. Cumberbatch, escorted by his *kavass* and a mounted policeman. Even had there been no object of profound historic and artistic interest to be seen, the beauty of the excursion would have amply repaid our trouble. As the day broke we were met by successions of gorgeously lovely landscapes.

The valley along which our road lay was hemmed in by mountains richly clothed with fruit trees, pines, cypresses and oaks, enfolded in the graceful drapery of vines and curtained with the festoons of climbing plants; wild flowers carpeted the "floor of the forest," and fragrant shrubs perfumed the fresh morning air.

In spring, when the cherries and other fruit trees are in blossom, this must be a happy valley indeed, but we saw it at its second moment of supreme beauty, when the woodland was aflame with what the Japanese call the brocade of the autumn tints. Nestled in the midst of these feasts for the eye lies the picturesque little

town of Nif, or Nymphi. As we saw it, the market-place, with its stalls surrounding a noble group of Oriental plane trees, and filled with a busy, kaleidoscopic crowd still, at that time, clothed in Eastern garb, was like a scene devised by some cunning stage artist. We ate the food which we had brought with us in an ancient *khan*, itself a picture of the East, and then went to visit the Governor, whom the Consul knew. For a while we lingered in the inner court of the great man's palace, a study such as Alma Tadema would have loved to paint, with its marble floor, its plashing fountain, fringed with oleanders, and the arches of its cloister decked with orange and lemon trees.

Two milk-white goats, his Excellency's special pets, came up confidentially to be stroked and coaxed. Presently the great man received us in an inner sanctum. Pipes, coffee, and phrases followed as usual, and then we went our way. Living the life of ease dear to the Turk in such surroundings—his home a gem in the loveliest setting—I felt that the Pasha must have realized the Italian dream of the sweetness of doing nothing.

A ride of about two hours from the town brought us to our goal. It would not be an easy matter for a traveller to find the effigy without a guide, so well is it hidden among the brushwood some three hundred yards above a pretty little mountain burn which comes tumbling down to the road. Would that it had been still better screened, for though there seemed to be people in Smyrna who had never heard of it, others there were who had found their way thither and thought it no sin to deface this hoary monument by graving their names in large letters all over the rock. One ruffian, a schoolmaster as I was told, had immortalized his vulgarity by chiselling his name deeply on the arm which lies across the breast of the old king. Had I been an autocrat I would have caused him to be soundly flogged by his own pupils. They would have enjoyed a rich, topsy-turvy treat and he would have met with a punishment befitting the crime.

The rock was originally sloping, but was cut into the perpendicular from the bottom upwards, leaving at the base a ledge which served as a seat where a pilgrim might rest in comfort. The figure is carved in deep relief and is seven feet and seven inches high,

measuring four feet from the right elbow to the left hand. The features are much worn and the letters which were on the breast have disappeared. The left hand holds the spear and the right the bow. Here the description of Herodotus, otherwise correct, goes astray, for he reverses these positions. A very intelligible mistake if he wrote from memory on his return home from the expedition; or possibly his account may have been taken from the other figure which he mentions. The conical cap, with a badge in front and a sort of brim to it, the spear and bow, the greaves on the thigh and a projection which must once have been the handle of a sword, are quite distinct.

We stayed for some time in contemplation of this record, between forty and fifty centuries old, of the pride of the old Egyptian king, and then, mounting our horses, turned their heads westward, sad that this day of beauty had come to an end. It remains on my memory as a rare experience, a flawless holiday, fitly crowned by a sunset that seemed to wreathe Smyrna in flames and turn its beauteous bay into a great lake of liquid fire.

October 30th, Sunday.—A day of rest much needed, for since we landed at the Dardanelles we had been a good deal knocked about, far more than appears in these pages, so after church we lounged lazily about Smyrna and drank in the glory of the view from the citadel, where the old Genoese towers stand among the ruins that were once a stronghold built by some Cyclopean Vauban. Here, too, is a small mosque on a site where the Christian Church of the Revelation is said to have stood; hard by must have been "the synagogue of Satan."* Very impressive, moreover, is the Turkish cemetery with its old and stately cypresses, finer even, as it seemed to us, than those of Constantinople.

As we wandered homeward we came down upon the track of the Smyrna and Aidin Railway. Wonderful are the caprices of fashion! What the Sweet Waters of Europe are to the ladies of Constantinople, that to the fair dames of Smyrna were the less romantic rails of the new road. They were the fashionable promenade of the Sabbath-keeping *bourgeoisie*—the line was thronged by numbers of Turkish ladies in many-coloured dresses; far more closely veiled

* Revelation ii. 8.

in their ghostly white yashmaks than their more emancipated sisters in Stamboul. Greek, Armenian and Frankish beauties, in bright French or pseudo-French raiment—many of them radiant with the beauty for which Ismir is famous—made a motley crowd; while sedate old Turks sat sipping their coffee and smoking their narghilehs in silent dignity under the orange and citron trees which fringe the cafés, watching from under their sleepy lids the brilliant colouring and glowing eyes of the Ionian dames and damsels.

Waiting for a ship, or indeed for anything, is but dreary work, but there was no feeling dull at Smyrna, for there was much to be seen and done, and we lingered luxuriously over the little that was left of a joyous holiday.

Of course we went to Ephesus, where Mr. Wood, acting for the British Museum, had not yet made his great discoveries, though in his first year's work he had unearthed much that was of interest. The modern village of Ayazaluk is almost entirely built up of the stones of the old city all huddled together higgledy-piggledy. Rarely carved capitals of pillars turned topsy-turvy form incongruous bases for fir posts, supporting the verandahs of mud-built shops in which fruiterers, pastry cooks and tobacconists ply their trade. A ruined mosque is a beautiful relic of old Moorish architecture, inside of which ancient Greek pillars have been adapted. The very stones in the graveyard are fragments of old columns and Turkish marbles of the middle ages. But what a noble position! And how glorious must Ephesus have been in the days of St. Paul, when it was a seaport and its imposing citadel overlooked the sea, now (in 1864) owing to alluvial deposits some four miles away!

Barring Damascus, no place is more full of associations and memories connected with St. Paul than Ephesus. It is strange indeed that so little should be known of the life of a saint whose ministry wrought more for the world than that of any other man before or since. Yet here are the remains of the very buildings among which he lived for years. It cannot be said of Ephesus as Lucan said of Troy "etiam periere ruinæ." Neither Goths nor Turks have entirely wiped them out.

Here is the great amphitheatre where the apostle "fought with beasts," where some twenty-five thousand spectators would assemble

for such a sight, and where Demetrius the silversmith raised the riot against him and "the whole city was filled with confusion." Here, too, is a little square building of stupendous antiquity, which tradition says was his prison; and why should it not have been? I am old-fashioned and simple enough to have faith in tradition, which is often as trustworthy as the written word, just as I humbly accept the letter written by St. Paul "to the saints which are at Ephesus," when he was "an ambassador in bonds," at Rome, and pay no heed to the learned hair-splittings of scholastic commentators, to whom I would say, in the famous words of Lord Melbourne, "Why can't you leave it alone?"

Seven years later I was again at Ephesus with Lord Stafford and George Crawley, and this time we found Mr. Wood triumphant. He had just reaped the fruit of eight years of assiduous labour—labour hindered by many difficulties, lack of funds, discouragement, and, last not least, the pestilent atmosphere of the fever swamps among which he had to work.

This second visit was deeply interesting, nor was it devoid of a certain element of fun. That time we arrived at Smyrna from Beirut in a small Russian coasting steamer which was carrying pilgrims from the Holy Land back to Odessa—always a curious and interesting lot of passengers, as I often found. We had to face a succession of gales, to the great discomfiture of the poor zealots. One fat old pilgrimess told me pathetically that she would have died had she not thought of the inconvenience that her death would cause on board, and so in the spirit of self-sacrifice she resisted and consented to live.

In the saloon, such as it was, we had as shipmate a certain elderly American general, who told us that he was an attorney, own correspondent to seven transatlantic newspapers, and that his journals were looked forward to by some of the leading families in various cities, unknown to me. As a man of letters he greatly admired Shakespeare. "Yes, sir!" he said, "Shakespeare is quite an institution. Emerson can write some poetry, but I guess he can't come up to that. With the Bible, Shakespeare and Webster's Dictionary, a man can get along. They are as good documents as a man need have for a library." A dear, innocent,

unsophisticated man was the Attorney-General, very good-natured, and a source of great amusement during all the time that he remained sticking to us with the affection of a burr.

Our lucky star was in the ascendant, for almost the first person whom we met in Smyrna was Mr. Wood, who most kindly agreed to go with us to Ephesus the next morning. When we reached the ruins, he showed us all his plans and explained his discoveries, setting forth the work of his eight years in an hour's pregnant talk. When he had made all clear, the good General said, "Then, sir, I gather from your conversation that the Temple of Diana was a round building." "Round, sir, round!" said Mr. Wood, "haven't I been telling you all the time that it was square?" Nothing abashed, the General looked round him and said: "Waal! if this was the site of the City of Ephesus, I'm glad to know it. It was quite considerable of a city, and the men that built it had some snap in 'em."

Steered by our learned pilot, we visited all the wonders that his patience and science had revealed—the Odeion, a beautiful little building with white marble steps decorated with carved lions' feet—the Wool Exchange, a most ingenious discovery—the marble tomb of Androclus. I have already spoken of the theatre, the stadium and other great witnesses of the past. Did we pass by the tomb of Mary Magdalene, that sweet woman whom the great Pope Gregory, for no earthly reason and without one scintilla of evidence, came to identify with the woman "which was a sinner"? Did we see the tomb of St. Luke, who told that unnamed sinner's touching story? Again I say, why not? These are secrets which will not be revealed until the Last Day, when the graves shall give up their dead. But even an Evangelist müst die somewhere, and what is more probable than that the early Christians, knowing where his remains lay in some place outside the city, should have brought them hither with pious pomp and reburied them in yonder round building, faced with marble and bearing as its device the bull, or buffalo, surmounted with a cross?

Mr. Wood's great find, then (in 1871) a discovery not very many days old, was the undoubted site of the great Temple of Diana. Careful study and reasoning led Mr. Wood to begin excavating

at a spot where he discovered the angle of the peribolus which was thrown by Augustus υἱός θεοῦ, the Son of God. (How like the Chinese imperial title, Tien Tzĕ, the son of Heaven!) Here were inscriptions bearing the name of the architect, the one partially the other wholly erased. This tallies with an edict which has been found ordering that the name of this man, who had fallen into disgrace, should be obliterated.

Having found the angle, Mr. Wood went to work with new enthusiasm and energy, and was rewarded some two months before our arrival by the unearthing of a huge white marble column of exquisite workmanship *in situ*. Thus was the vexed question of the site of the mighty temple set at rest and Mr. Wood's work crowned with success. Much has been done since his time; but he showed the way, a successful pioneer. When we considered the vastness of the inclosure and the magnificent proportions of the column we understood the cry, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!"

While Mr. Wood was giving us a lecture of surpassing interest, I began to think that even the General was touched by the sacred fire of enthusiasm, but I was reckoning without my General. He was destined once more to put his foot in it. Like Sydney Smith's silent man, he rudely broke the spell. When Mr. Wood had finished speaking, he looked for a moment or two pensively at the column, and then picking up a great stone, said: "Waal now! Do think! If that piece of marble was part of the Temple of Diana, I guess I'm bound to have a chunk of it," and was just about to chip off as large a piece as he could, when Mr. Wood, who was nothing if not peppery, flew at him viciously; the tiger that lies sleeping in every man was aroused, and I verily believe that had Mr. Wood held a deadly weapon in his hand our poor Attorney-General would have had but a faint chance of surviving. As it was he collapsed under the great discoverer's architectonic fury and remained sadly silent for the rest of the day. What manner of report, I wonder, did the seven newspapers receive of our Ephesian expedition!

The next morning at breakfast we took leave of our General. We were bound for Constantinople and our ship was to sail at noon. He was bound heaven knows whither in search of

paragraphs. After breakfast he announced his intention of going up to the citadel of Smyrna. "I am informed," he told us, "that there air up there some Cyclopean walls. Now Cyclops lived quite a long while ago, and I'm not going to miss seeing what he built." It was rather a shame to disillusion the poor gentleman, but I thought of the seven across the Atlantic and was stony-hearted. When I explained to him the meaning of Cyclopean building the General was disenchanted, but he went up to the citadel nevertheless, and I have no doubt made a very pretty story out of the great one-eyed builder.

* * * * * * *

And now let me go back seven years and start again on Gunpowder Plot Day, 1864, when we left the radiantly beautiful bay of Smyrna for England on board the Austrian Lloyd's ship *Messina*. Twenty-six hours' steam brought us to the Island of Syra, where, after being roasted for a day and a night on that sun-scorched rock, where no trace of vegetation is to be seen—to all appearance an island of bumboat-men and evil smells—on the 7th we shipped on board the *Calcutta*, also an Austrian Lloyd's ship, bound for Trieste.

It is something to have seen Navarino and to have passed Ithaca, even in the night; but what gave especial interest to our cruise was meeting Count Ungern Sternberg (or was he a Baron? I forget), a Russian who was a relation of many people whom I had known well in St. Petersburg. Though a general in the army, he was one of those travelling agents who in those days used to wander over Europe apparently charged with no special mission, but keeping their ears and eyes open everywhere, and doubtless finding many an opportunity of rendering some underground service to the rather tortuous policy in which the Russian Foreign Office in those days delighted. Now that the Gortchakoffs and Ignatieffs have carried their diplomacy into another and let us hope a better world, there is perhaps no room for the political knight errant of whom Ungern Sternberg was at that time a rather famous representative. I knew him well by name, though we had never met, and he was a most agreeable companion. We

talked a great deal about our common friends in London, Paris, St. Petersburg (I cannot yet bring myself to talk of Petrograd). On politics, for some reason best known to himself, he was, as he would have put it, *très boutonné;* but when we reached Corfu and he saw the remains of the blown-up forts his excitement got the better of his diplomacy, and he could not conceal his joy at the loss which England had sustained, or his wonder at the short sightedness which prompted it. "What was your Lord Russell about?" he said. "See how many combinations may make England regret this step. For instance, suppose that France and Italy—no impossible contingency—were united against her; what a stronghold they would have at Corfu!"

This was much the opinion that Lord Palmerston professed in 1850, but in 1863 he yielded to Lord Russell, and, apparently without a misgiving, gave up what he once considered too important a naval and military post ever to be abandoned by us. Lord Russell, as usual, was outwitted; he believed in a plebiscite and that a people should belong to masters of their own choosing; he could not see that, in this case, the plebiscite was an engine worked largely by ecclesiastical means at the disposal of Russia—in fact, a political and clerical intrigue.

A very intelligent Roman Catholic priest told me that the islanders, having been led by Mr. Gladstone, in 1858, to believe that England would never give up the protectorate, thought that they were quite safe in declaring for annexation to Greece, as they were urged to do by their priests. They would in that way save their face with the Orthodox Church, while they would still enjoy the material prosperity for which they had to thank England. They thought that their true interest was to run with the hare and hunt with the hounds. The Greek Archbishop used all his power to further the plans of Russia, and during the time of voting was nightly closeted in secret conference with the Russian Consul. When the end came, His Grace received a high decoration from the Tsar, from whom it was even said that he was actually in receipt of pay.

Curiously enough, the party that had been hottest for annexation with Greece under King Otho would not vote for it under

King George. The reason alleged was that the revolution against Otho had been the work of England, and that King George being the nominee of England, annexation with Greece would put the islands more than ever under the thumb of Great Britain. My priest went on to deplore the ruin which their mistaken nationalism had brought upon the unhappy people. Many of the principal business houses in Corfu were practically bankrupt and new failures daily expected. The poorer people found no sale for their fish and the produce of the farms, gardens and orchards. The market, which did a roaring trade daily, sometimes as much as two or three hundred pounds changing hands in a morning, was a thing of the past. Now there was no English Government House, no prosperous officials, no garrison, and with the departure of the last redcoat the happy days of plenty had gone. "Oh!" he cried, "if you would only come back again!"

We went to the principal hotel in the great square. The landlord received us with many expressions of joy. We ordered luncheon and a carriage. "I will go and cook at once," said he. "Eh! Gentlemen! Six months ago I had a cook and waiters and maids, two coachmen and plenty of horses. Now I must go and dress the luncheon. I must serve it; and when you have finished I shall harness the carriage and drive you out! and I shall make your beds if you sleep here to-night." Perfectly good-humoured the poor man was, and that made his story all the more pathetic.

When we got home, after a drive through the lovely garden scenery, he made the beds, for we were not to sail till the next day. More talk in the evening. The distress was beyond belief, and it was no mere temporary distress—bad times with the hope of better things in the future. The olive harvest, for instance, was in deadly straits, for the proprietors could not pay a wage of five shillings a day for the gathering, and the labourers were the masters of the situation and could demand what they chose. In this way did the small landowners who helped in working the plebiscite reap the reward of their folly. Humble civil servants who used to be paid to the hour had to wait a week or a fortnight for the salary upon which their daily food depended. Cultivation

looked as though it must die out, for the four or five hundred wretched Greek soldiery who had replaced the English garrison spent their scanty pay on tobacco alone; no one knew how they lived. Corfu was desolate and England had lost a stronghold that never can be replaced. No wonder the Ungern Sternbergs rejoiced!

It is perhaps one of the signs of England's greatness that she has been able so far to survive the foreign policy of Lord Russell. Yet even to-day, in 1915, she is paying the penalty and at what a price! I wonder whether if he were still alive he would tell us, as he did at Blairgowrie more than fifty years ago, to "Rest and be thankful."

Nov. 11.—Our last day's cruise was delightful. The calendar told us that we were in November. The weather said June. Our skipper being a native of Dalmatia intimately knowing the coast and all its snares dared to take his big ship inside the islands, so we had a view of lovely scenery usually only possible for the smallest of craft. At a point on the shore stood a little house and in front of it a group consisting of his wife and children, on the watch to wave him Godspeed; possibly the chance of a glimpse of those dear ones weighed more with him than the desire to show us the beauties of the Dalmatian coast—at any rate, we were the gainers.

At Trieste we said good-bye to our good friend the Russian, whom we left still chuckling over Lord Russell and the Ionian Islands.

CHAPTER XV

CHINA IN 1865–1866

IN " Un Pèlerin d'Angkor," which for the sake of its wonderful descriptions of tropical scenery is to me one of Pierre Loti's most charming books, he tells us how when he was a little child he was held in chains by the idea of the mysterious temples hidden away, forgotten, buried in the teeming jungles of Cambodia, and how at last his dream was realized in that long pilgrimage up the Mekong river of which his poetic descriptions, carrying us with a magician's wand into the mysterious silences of tropical forests, are tinged with that melancholy which seems inseparable from his genius, even when he calls up the happiness of reaching the long-wished for goal of a cherished ambition. I once asked him why he was so pessimistic—why that persistent note of sadness? He answered very simply, " La vie est triste," and his eyes had that far away, yearning look, a characteristic of his, which seems so strange in a man whose life has been one long chain of brilliant successes.

Well! I too, as a child, had dreams which carried me far away. A kind aunt had given me a set of so-called rice-paper pictures of lovely imperial ladies with architectural structures of hair on their heads, gentlemen clad in purple silk robes with ephods embroidered with five-clawed golden dragons, drawings of vividly-coloured flowers and fruit, of horror-striking tortures, unheard of out of Tartarus, being inflicted upon bleeding criminals. But beyond all was the story of Aladdin falling in love with the Princess Badroulbadour on her way to the bath at Peking. My young brain was aflame with the longing to go to China and see all these

things. How to manage it? Should I ever get nearer to that land of wonders than a certain fascinating curiosity shop in Hanway Yard—now Hanway Street—a beloved and much-haunted place full of bowls and jars, eggshell china, rosebacked plates and lange Elizen, which now would fetch several pounds for every shilling that they cost then. That dream never left me. It haunted my boyhood and my young manhood and, like Pierre Loti's cherished dream, it came into life at last.

One day in the month of February, 1865, Mr. Hammond came into the French Department of the Foreign Office evidently rather uneasy. He told us that he was very much put out by not being able to get a man to go out to Peking, to take the place of St. John who was coming home at once across Siberia. He had tried in vain to find someone and was in great difficulties. A sudden thought struck me. "Will you send me out?" I asked. He hesitated for a moment and said, "Well, if you are really willing to go, we might arrange a transfer. How soon could you be ready?" "As soon as you please," I answered. "Can you be ready in a fortnight?" I jumped at the offer and went out then and there to start on getting together my outfit. It was rather a sudden surprise to my people when I reached home that afternoon laden with a sun-helmet and various small purchases of which the purpose did not at first sight seem quite clear to them.

The last few days before my departure were spent a great deal with Sir Frederic Bruce, our minister at Peking, who was at home on leave, and who gave me all the advice that would be of value to a novice going out to the Far East. He was one of those men whom it is good to have known, singularly handsome, with a smile and laughing brown eyes which seemed to carry sunshine into every room that he went into; he was a diplomatist of rare ability. Lord Elgin, indeed, with whom he first went out to China, used to say of him that he was by far the ablest of the four brothers, all of whom were certainly men of mark.

At Peking he was an unqualified success. The Chinese, impressed like all Asiatics by a fine reverence for lineage and blue blood, saw in him a great gentleman whose transparent honesty they could trust. There were not very many legations in China

in his time, but the ministers who were his colleagues, men like M. de Bourboulon, the Frenchman, and General Vlangaly, the Russian, were devoted to him. They listened to him with the most profound respect and affection, and General Vlangaly told me that whenever any knotty problem cropped up the first question was "Qu'en dira Sir Frederic?" His own staff from Wade downwards worshipped him. "Wade is a great mimic," he said to me once, "mind you ask him whether he has added me to his Gallery of Illustration."* He had done so, for when I asked Wade the question at Peking, he went off at score and told me how on one occasion he was interpreting for Sir Frederic at the Tsung Li Ya-mên (the Foreign Office) when he, Wade, who was pepper itself, got extremely angry, while Sir Frederic was quietly puffing away at his cheroot. "But," said the Prince Regent, "I see that you are very angry—yet I believe that you are interpreting for Pu Ta Jên (Sir F. Bruce); he, on the contrary, appears to be quite calm—not a bit angry." "There, Sir Frederic," said Wade, furious, "the Prince says that you are not angry—that it is only I who am excited." "Oh! Damme," drawled Sir Frederic in his large, good-humoured way, taking the cheroot out of his mouth, "tell him I'm deyvlish angry," and with that, beaming upon Prince Kung and the assembled mandarins, he smoked away as contentedly as before. Wade was telling the story against himself, and as he told it I could almost fancy that Sir Frederic was in the room.

The day before I left I went to say good-bye to Sir Frederic. When we shook hands he said, "Remember that when you come back from China you must come to me wherever my post may be! That is to say," he added with a sigh, "if I survive the age of fifty, which seems to be fatal to all of my family." The sad "if" was justified! He went out as Minister to the United States, won all hearts there as he did everywhere else, and died of heart failure at some small railway station. I was told afterwards

* The "Gallery of Illustration" was a place of entertainment famous in those days under the direction of Mr. and Mrs. German Reed (Miss Priscilla Horton), with whom were joined Arthur Cecil and Corney Grain. They produced, among other famous pieces, Sullivan and Burnand's *Cox and Box*.

that a tablespoonful of brandy might have saved his precious life! His death in 1867, at the age of fifty-three, was mourned in the East and in the West.

1865

I REACHED Paris on the 8th of March; I was obliged to spend forty-eight hours there, as there were certain matters to which I was compelled to attend, also I was anxious to see Mr. John Dent, the head of the famous China house, and Baron Overbeck, the Austrian Consul General in Hong Kong, who was going East by the same mail. It was no great penance having to pass two evenings in Paris with them, for there was much going on, and Offenbach's "Belle Hélène" a delight, with Schneider and Dupuis, was in full swing. Was there ever a piece half so gay, half so witty, or half so impudent! The face of Paris when Helen showed him "mes portraits de famille," Jupiter and Leda, Jupiter and Europa, Jupiter and Danae, etc., was something to remember!

The 10th of March, 1865, was a fateful day for the Napoleonic Dynasty, for on that day the Duc de Morny, Louis Napoléon's half brother and most devoted friend, died. He was attended by Sir Joseph Olliffe, the physician of the English Embassy, arousing great jealousy among the French doctors, who of course swore that his life might have been saved. Morny was the son of the Comte de Flahault, an old friend of my father's whom I knew when he was ambassador in London, and Queen Hortense. When Louis Napoléon became President of the Republic the two brothers met for the first time, and the deepest affection immediately sprang up between the two. Under the Empire, Morny who with Maupas, Persigny, and St. Arnaud, had been one of the chief actors in the *coup d'état* of 1851, became President of the Corps Législatif, and held that office until 1856, when he went as ambassador to St. Petersburg, and in great splendour represented Louis Napoléon at the coronation of the Emperor Alexander the Second. On his return to Paris in 1857 he again took up the post of President.

He was a dandy and *viveur*, a man of many accomplishments, and a capable if rather erratic statesman, but he was one of those members of the Imperial group who were fiercely accused of

gambling on the Bourse. However that might be, he was immensely popular. Paris loved him, fascinated by his reputation of irresistibility, and even by the contemptuous, haughty look with which he strode through the world; when he died, the grief was general and unfeigned; and poor Sir Joseph Olliffe was very cruelly attacked by the Faculty who were sure of the applause of the mob. The story of Morny's life and death furnished the "motif" of Alphonse Daudet's book "Le Nabab," which was certainly not written in the Napoleonic interest, for indeed Daudet was a partisan of the old régime. When Morny offered him a post in his private office he felt bound in common honesty to say that he was a legitimist. "Ma foi! L'Impératrice l'est aussi," answered Morny, with his quiet, impertinent smile.* The frivolous side of Morny, the "Richelieu-Brummell," as Daudet called him, was always very much in evidence, and it was said, not without truth, that he showed far more interest in the rehearsals of *M. Choufleuri restera chez lui*—a rather poor operatic farce of his for which Offenbach wrote the music—than ever he did in the discussions of the Corps Législatif. Indeed, while *M. Choufleuri* was in preparation he was neither to have nor to hold, he would attend to nothing else.

Louis Napoléon went to take leave of his brother on his death-bed. When the moment for leaving came, the dying man, holding the Emperor's hand in his, summoned up strength enough to say: "Sire, méfiez-vous de l'Allemagne!" Those were his last pregnant words to the Sovereign and brother whom he loved so well. This was told me by one who was present at what he described as a most touching death-bed scene, for the love between the two men was very real. That dying speech was prophetic.

Had Morny lived things might have been very different; but his death left a blank which could not be filled; Louis Napoléon was fast growing old, martyrized by the disease which ultimately killed him; he needed a strong man at his elbow—a man with political prescience; failing that he fell into the hands of a gang, Ollivier, Gramont, Lebœuf and others, with female influences at work behind them, who led him to his ruin. Morny in spite of

* See the preface to "Le Nabab."

his gay, devil-may-care dandyism, could see clearly ahead; he and he alone among the Emperor's surroundings might have saved the dynasty. But that was not to be; it was doomed. The passing bell for Morny rang the knell of the Empire.

The intimacy between Morny and Sir Joseph Olliffe, an old friend of ours whom we all loved, was something more, if possible, than that between physician and patient. There was a very firm attachment between the two, and they were engaged in an affair in which they both took the greatest interest. It was they who built Deauville upon a site which I remember a flat wilderness of sand, with a few scanty bristles of rushes cropping up here and there, opposite Trouville, on the other side of the outlet of the river Toucques It is only fair to say that if Mora in the "Nabab" was a more or less faithful portrait of Morny, Jenkins, the quack Doctor, was certainly not drawn from Sir Joseph Olliffe, who was as upright and transparent an English gentleman as ever entered the medical profession. He was respected and loved by all who knew him.

On the night of the Duc de Morny's death I left Paris for Marseilles. A terrible voyage on board the P. & O. s.s. *Massilia*. The Gulf of Lyons was in a perfect fury, and the passengers sea-sick and mostly sulky at having to go out to "meet" the hot weather on the other side. This made ladies out of season, but my cabin-companion—one of those grumblers who are such a misfortune in the East—told me that even if it had been to "meet" the cool weather he should have left his wife and children behind; according to him India was not a fit place for an English sow, let alone an English gentlewoman. The sea was so high that even the live stock on board suffered. Bets were going as to whether one bullock would survive the night of the 17th of March—odds against were laid freely. I do not remember which won—the sea or the bullock.

When the railway deposited us at Suez (there was no Canal in those days) we were shipped on board the *Simla*, a crack ship. I had the luck to be separated from my grumbling ship-mate of the *Massilia*, and was doubled up with Colonel Gloster, who was going out to command the —— Regiment in India. He and I and Overbeck with one or two others made a very pleasant little coterie. How much more delightful were the ships of those days, with their

beautiful, free, white decks and a view of the sea all round, than the modern floating castles, with all their extravagances and luxurious discomforts. Everything was spick and span, the metal fittings and binnacle shone like the gold in a Regent Street jeweller's shop. The decks were so clean that you might have eaten your dinner off them, and the quartermasters, as smart as blue-jackets in the Navy, were always on the alert to put the crooked straight or render some small service. It was like yachting in its highest perfection.

A few days of lovely weather in the balmy air of the Indian Ocean, lounging, dozing, dreaming, watching the wild leaps of the flying-fish escaping from the dolphins, speculating upon the unknown that lay ahead—those were days of which every hour was precious. The four or five of us older men who had made friends sat together in a well-chosen corner. The griffins and youngsters bound for the far East left us severely to ourselves; we were told that they called our corner the lions' den. Well, we were very happy and did not growl too much. At Pointe de Galle Overbeck and I bade Gloster good-bye.

At Hong Kong, after three or four delightful days, thanks to the hospitality of Messrs. Dent, I parted from Overbeck, and the last link with the "lions' den" of the *Simla* was finally broken. He, Gloster and I corresponded fitfully, but we did not meet again for nine years, and then in rather a curious way—indeed, if it were not for the wish to record the meeting later on, and to explain its significance, I should not have ventured to write about the voyage.

All the "old China hands" of the sixties will remember with affection Captain "Ikey" Bernard, who commanded the *Ganges* which carried me from Hong Kong to Shanghai. Captain Bernard was a great character in the China Sea. He was the son of a former professor of Hebrew at Cambridge, from whom he had inherited literary tastes of which the choice little library in his cabin gave proof, and he kept glowing more than a small spark of that sacred fire which burns upon the University altar. He made me free of his cabin, and I spent many hours there in great comfort, and with some profit.

He was, moreover, something of an epicure, and he and I and two

other passengers dined and had luncheon in his cabin, where we had the best that the ship could afford : it was a coasting voyage through narrow island passages, where one could almost hear the fury of the sea dashing itself against the black rocks frowning on either side we passed many fishing junks with their busy crews, and the skipper, who never could resist the temptation of fresh fish, would stop and buy quantities of pomfret, all alive, paying for them in ship's biscuit. Those were the halcyon days of monopoly. Fancy stopping a mail steamer to buy fish in these times of ocean-racing and competition ! Fifty years ago, "Ikey" Bernard did not hesitate. His father must have been a very cultivated and remarkable man. I remember a book of essays upon various subjects by him, full of wise and clever thoughts, amongst others one on Inspiration which fascinated me. I often met my friend "Ikey" during the years that I spent in the Far East, for, welcome whenever his ship touched the shore, he was one of those much-invited men, whom everybody is glad to secure, and we had many pleasant talks about all things and some others.

Often I wondered what took him to sea ; with his literary tastes, which must have developed very young, he would have been so perfectly suited to a student's career, so entirely at home installed in the comfortable arm-chair of some common room, sipping his port after a good dinner in hall at the end of a day congenially spent in the thumbing of folios and quartos. He would have been an ideal Don—he *was* a splendid seaman. My old shipmate has probably long since gone to his rest. If he be yet alive, my duty to him ! If not, may that rest be peace ! He was a genial, honest, cultivated gentleman, and there are many less worthy names whose memory has been celebrated by far defter pens than mine.

When I left Shanghai for Tientsing on the 11th of May I was at last alone in the world. Up to that time I had had a succession of pleasant companions on board ; now, besides the very offensive native families huddled in the steerage, who, when the sun shone, spent their time in the hunting of fleas—and worse—there was but one other passenger—one of the curious waifs and strays of Europe who at that time used to float about the China Sea, hoping to get a job, if not out of the Peking Government, at any rate out of some

provincial Governor or local mandarin. I suppose that they sometimes succeeded; at any rate they were always ready to stake their small capital upon the venture; if they failed, when the hundred or two of dollars were spent they went under and joined the seething mass of undesirables who used to loaf about the open ports, picking up a meal and a drink—oftenest a drink—wherever the fates would be kind.

It was a dull voyage through a leaden sea into which we steamed after a thick fog had sent us hard and fast aground on one of the treacherous shoals of the Yang Tsĕ Chiang. Then came a spell of dirty weather, till we reached the fine broad headland of the Shantung promontory with the outlying rocky islands, which are the danger of this part of the China sea. There was a strong colony of rats on board, and in the great river we had shipped a host of the most ravenous mosquitoes, whose singing was almost as bad as their biting. Altogether a trip that is best forgotten.

There was plenty of time to think over all the wonders that I had seen since leaving Suez—Mount Sinai—the yellow desert of Eastern Africa; the fiery rocks of Aden; the palm groves of Ceylon, lapped by the waves of the Indian Ocean; the nutmeg orchards of Penang scenting the air; the pineapple hedges of Singapore; brown huts teeming with even browner life, lifted above the fever-swamps like the old lake-dwellings of the men who lived before history was; Canton, with its narrow streets and many-coloured, gilded perpendicular signs, as if a pantomime procession had been suddenly arrested and turned to stone by the head of a Medusa. But above all, the boundless hospitality and kindness of the merchant princes of Hong Kong and Shanghai.

Those were the last of the days when the China trade was in the hands of a few great houses; when the wonderful yearly ocean race took place to land the first cargo of tea in London; when the opium-clippers from Bombay would lie under Pok-Fa-Lum, land the supercargo and wait till he and the house to which his ship was consigned had made the price and then sail gallantly round the corner into Hong Kong. Vast fortunes were made in opium, silk and tea, and right royally were they spent. The men who used up their lives in unhealthy climates, far away from home and family,

sacrificing much and often suffering much, felt that they had a right to find what compensation they could in making their banishment tolerable; but what they seemed to delight in more than aught else was in welcoming those fellow countrymen whom duty or pleasure carried within possible range of their kindness.

There were no hotels in the old days, but any man who had a letter for one of the great houses would be sure of as hearty a welcome as if he had been an old and a dear friend.

Our one port of call was Chifu, a quaint little seaside town with rather a pretty background of hills, used as a sea-bathing place by some of the Europeans in North China. Here it was that a few months before a not very large packing-case was delivered, which, on being opened, was found to contain human fragments which were the remains of the traitor Burgevine, an adventurer who, having been first in the service of the Imperial Government, went over to the Taiping rebels, and finally falling into the hands of the Imperial army, was sentenced to death by Ling Chi—hacking to pieces in small morsels, the punishment of high treason.

Here I made the acquaintance of a notable man, one of those heroes who disappear, unknown and unrecorded, swallowed up by some cataclysm of fate before the world has had a chance of knowing what it has lost. Mr. Thomas was a missionary sent out by the London Missionary Society to China; he had a real genius for acquiring languages—speaking French, German, Russian, without having had any facility save his own talents and industry. It was not long before he attained quite a considerable proficiency in the spoken language of northern China, but when he had been eighteen months in the country he was called upon by the Society to preach in Chinese. This he refused to do, for he was too clever a linguist not to be aware of the pitfalls created by a modicum of knowledge, and he declined to make Christianity ridiculous. So he and the Society parted, and he continued to work, living upon a miserable pittance as best he might.

In the meantime he had become bitten with the desire to learn Corean—a language of which practically nothing was known. He made friends with the skipper of a Corean junk trading with Chifu, on board of which he lived for some weeks. He urged his friend to

let him sail with him for Seoul, but the Hermit Kingdom, as it was called, resolutely shut its gates to all foreigners, and to approach it was death. Nothing daunted, Mr. Thomas ended by gaining his point, and the skipper consented to take him, on condition that he should wear the native dress, in mourning, which meant that a veil should hang from the brim of the tall hat, completely concealing the face. The voyage was successful, the venturesome Englishman was not discovered, and it was not long after his return that I met him. He was a singularly attractive personality, handsome, clever and, in spite of a certain modest reticence, very interesting.

There is an old French saying, *Qui a bu boira.* Mr. Thomas was not contented with his unique achievement; he must needs go back again. He could not rest. At last, after many vain trials, by holding out prospects of great gain, he persuaded the captain of a small American ship to sail for Corea with himself as interpreter. It is known that they reached Chemulpho and anchored in the Seoul River. In the night the Coreans came down in force and set fire to the ship. " The rest is silence ! "—not a soul escaped. It was at Peking that I heard the news some months later; and it was there that I realized how wise he had been when he refused to degrade our Faith by attempting to expound it to a people singularly alive to the dignity of letters.

There was in Peking in my time one of the best men that I ever knew. He was a Scot, possessed of some means of his own, besides a salary from the Society which sent him out as missionary. He worked like a slave at the language, and translated the " Pilgrim's Progress " into Chinese, which he published with pictures of Christian and all the great characters dressed in the Chinese costume with pig-tails. Alas ! in many removals my copy, which he gave me, has been lost. He also wore the native dress, lived on a *tiao*, something like sixpence of our money, a day, and gave the rest of his ample means to the poor. He had no particle of linguistic talent, and yet he would preach ! I have heard him address a crowd of Chinese outside the Chien Mên, the great gate of the Tartar city, from the top of a cart, preaching in Chinese pronounced with a strong Aberdonian accent, and when he had finished call out " *Ni mên tung tê pu tung tê* " (" Do you understand? "), and with one accord the

crowd cried back, shaking their hands from side to side: "*Pu tung tê!*" ("We don't understand").

And now try to realize what this means. Fancy a Chinese missionary standing on the top of a taxi-cab at Charing Cross, preaching Buddhism in pidgin English to a cockney mob, and you have the analogy. Here was a good man, a very good man, whose whole life was an example of the purest Christianity, turning that Christianity into a farce, for the "heathen" to mock at.

How well I remember a few days after my arrival at Peking, as I was riding out of the Legation gates, being greeted by a gentleman in Chinese dress, who was sitting on the bench by the escort's guard-room, in the broadest Scotch. It was my friend the missionary. He had a little church of his own at which his few converts attended, and there was one little boy, by whom he set great store, who was by way of acting in some sort as attendant. When the good man was engrossed in his sermon, John (for he had been baptized) would quietly run out and indulge in foot-shuttlecock—a very pretty game, by the bye—or some other sport dear to the Pekingese street arabs, until the voice of the preacher ceased, when he would be sternly called back to his duties.

Mr. Thomas knew better than to risk the ridicule of preaching. When the Society insisted, they lost the services of a saint, a devoted apostle who was, above all other men whom I came across in the Far East, fitted by genius, by learning, and by courage, to have done the work which they and he had at heart. Few personalities that I have met in the long days of my life have impressed me more. He was a young man, about eight and twenty. Had he lived he must have made his mark; he fell a sacrifice to ignorance and stupidity, the two demons which have wrought so much evil in the world.

We left Chifu in the afternoon of Monday, the fifteenth of May, and on the Tuesday morning took in the pilot who was to steer us up the tortuous course of the Pei Ho river. The first sight of the Taku Forts filled me with pity for the two garrisons—the one British, the other French—which had occupied them since 1860 lest the disaster of 1859, when Sir Frederic Bruce tried in vain to reach Peking for the ratification of the Treaty and two of our gun-

boats were sunk, should be repeated. The desolation of the place was chilling. On the side of the fort occupied by our troops were a few mud huts and a sort of wretched inn, the rendezvous of pilots.

On the French side it was even worse—nothing but an endless bleak tract of mud, flush with the filthy water, all of one colour with the land, so that it was hard to say where the mud ended and the sea began, and even the wild fowl seemed sad and desolate, and I wondered why, having wings, they did not fly to some more cheerful home. No more filthy little stream than the Pei Ho ever defiled a sea. As I wrote at the time: "Mud forts, mud houses, mud fields, and a muddy river discharging its daily burthen of mud into a muddy sea—everything is mud." It is difficult for water, especially running water, to be ugly and uninteresting, but the Pei Ho accomplished that feat. Higher up the stream there were some stunted trees and green fields, but the country was utterly dull and featureless. The navigation of the river was difficult enough; perpetually shifting mud-banks in mid-stream made the channel as crooked and uncertain as Chinese diplomacy.

Several times we collided with junks, and on more than one occasion our pilot had to send men ashore with a hawser which they fastened round a willow tree to let the ship swing. She was a queer little tramp, stout enough and fast enough, as times went, for she could do her eight knots, and perhaps a half, in the open sea, but the strangest thing about her was that, although nominally belonging to a German firm, she was really owned by a Chinese merchant in Tientsing, to whom the whole of her cargo was consigned. That fifty years ago the Chinese, so stiff-backed against all that was European, should have owned a foreign-built steam tramp seems almost incredible. But the little *Yün tsĕ fei*, "Walkee all same fly," as a Chinaman translated her name, did her little commercial patrol of the Gulf of Pei-chi-li with great regularity.

I found Tientsing holiday-making. Saurin, my old friend and colleague, had come down from Peking for the races with M. Glinka, an attaché of the Russian Legation, and they were staying with M. Buitzow, the Russian Consul, who very kindly put me up also; I met him again eight years later, on the occasion of my second visit to Japan in 1873—a very agreeable man.

It was a stroke of luck falling in with Saurin, for we left Tientsing together the next day and so I had a friend under whose auspices I was able to reach Peking in far greater comfort than I could have expected. We wriggled up the ugly corkscrew stream in three boats; up one reach we had the wind with us, in the next it would be dead against us, and we could only get along by towing and punting. The shoals were as innumerable as ever and so we were constantly crossing the river along a course mapped out by twigs of willow stuck in the mud. However, at last, at two in the afternoon of Sunday the twenty-first, we reached Tungchou—famous for the tragedy of the capture of the English prisoners in 1860—and outside the walls of the city, under the pleasant shade of a great tree by a wayside inn, we found our horses and an escort which had been sent to meet us. My horse was a grey Arab that had been the charger of my gallant friend Colonel Fane of Fane's Horse who, like my friend now of more than half a century, Sir Dighton Probyn, had played a conspicuous part in the war of 1860.

The country between Tungchou and Peking is absolutely flat, very populous, with many villages and endless graveyards, the most sacred of all objects to the Chinaman. There are plenty of fine trees and a wealth of greenery in the richly cultivated fields, so that I was rather agreeably surprised, for I had expected nothing so refreshing to the eye: to be sure, it was the early summer, before the scorching heats and long droughts had come to tan the crops to one uniform brown. All of a sudden, at a turn of the road close in front of us, quite unsuspected, invisible until we were immediately under it, I saw before me the city of Peking, the city of my dreams.

There at last were the grim, dark grey walls just as I had fancied them, formidable, frowning; behind them the mystery of centuries. At intervals rose the great towers, rearing their fantastic roofs with curved eaves above huge gates in and out of which the yellow crowds were hurrying, jostling, eagerly busy. Coolies carrying their burdens at each end of a bamboo pole slung across one shoulder, merchants, small gentry, carts tenanted, some by mandarins surrounded by retainers with their red-tasselled caps, others by much-painted ladies with gaudy ornaments in the edifices of their quaintly-dressed, shining black hair; old women in charge of

babies; a prisoner guarded by two jailers, his head protruding out of the heavy wooden *cangue;* the beggars, quite worthy of their fame for filth and repulsiveness—just such a crowd as existed in Kâng Hsi's time two hundred years ago, nothing changed, save that the city has grown a little more shabby, with more ruined spaces caused by fire and neglect in a country where nothing is ever repaired; above all, a whole series of seemingly familiar pictures—the rice-paper drawings of my childhood in the flesh!

But the dust! I have seen dust in many lands—one of the meannesses of Providence, poor Alfred Montgomery used to call it—notably in South Africa which, in that respect and some others, is bad to beat; but Peking outdoes them all. Fancy riding up to your horse's hocks in a fine black powder, which, when the wind blows over the desert of Gobi, pervades everything; insidious, ineluctable, streaming in thin rays like the motes in a sunbeam through unsuspected chinks and crevices until you may trace your name with your finger on any single thing in your most cunningly protected room.

In one of those dust-storms, thick as a London fog, I have known a boat leaving a ship outside the Taku forts, forced to pull round and round in blind circles until the black veil should lift, or rather fall, and daylight once more break through the gloom. And when the rainy season comes, then the streets of Peking are like canals in which what once was dust is now a noisome Acherontian slime.

Peking stands in need of forgiveness for much. Smells that must be smelt to be believed; sights such as the Beggars' Bridge, which are sickening horrors; squalid houses, suggesting indescribable interiors, for the manners and customs of the Po Hsing* are not attractive; streets ill-paved and never cleaned; much to offend the senses at every step, and yet, abuse it as we might, Peking as I knew it fifty years ago had about it a certain mysterious charm which I think most people felt, and which has never been so well described as by Baroness von Heyking in "Briefe die ihn nicht erreichten." How cleverly, without any attempt at description, by a few magic words scattered here and there, she makes us feel the magic of the old, sad-coloured, grey, ruinous city!

* Po Hsing—"the hundred names" = the οἱ πολλοί.

CHAPTER XVI

PEKING

WE rode into Peking at the Hata Gate and threading our way through the throng, soon found ourselves outside the Liang Kung Fu, the palace of the Dukes of Liang, which was the English Legation, separated by a road from an almost dry canal. The great gates were thrown open by the escort man on duty and we rode in to receive the warmest welcome from Mr. Wade, the *chargé d'affaires*, who later became Sir Thomas Wade, K.C.B., G.C.M.G., and British Minister.

I soon found that Sir Frederic Bruce had in no wise exaggerated the delight that was to be had in Mr. Wade's society. He was at that time a man of forty-seven, but he looked older, for climate and a strenuous life during a quarter of a century into which he had packed more adventures and experiences than fall to the lot of most men in twice the time, had told upon him; but in character he was as gay as a boy, full of fun, with a keen sense of humour, and an excellent story-teller, a talent to which his powers as a mimic, of which I have already spoken, contributed not a little.

He had been a soldier for a time, like his father, holding a commission in the 42nd Highlanders and afterwards in the 98th, of which Colin Campbell, Lord Clyde, was Colonel, and which was to take part in the first China war in 1841. On the way out round the Cape, being already an expert in European languages, he set to work to learn Chinese. It was a colossal task which few men would have attempted; indeed, remembering the very scanty books which then existed, I can hardly conceive how he took the first plunge. During the war he was of the greatest

use and so, when peace came, he was appointed interpreter to the garrison at Hong Kong.

The part which he played in all subsequent events in China till the end of the war in 1860 is well known, though it was not sufficiently recognized until long afterwards. He was always building nests for other birds to lay in. Take, for instance, the case of the Maritime Customs of China. Out of ten thousand well-informed men there is perhaps not one who does not believe that the Imperial Customs Service of China was formed and organized by Sir Robert Hart. Yet that is not the case. The service was started and organized in 1854, when Hart was an unknown quantity and just leaving Belfast as a boy of nineteen, by an international committee, English, French and American, Wade being the English representative, and the working man of the three; so much so that the other two, feeling that they were not necessary, retired, leaving the Englishman to finish the job, and carrying into practice Lord John Russell's dictum that the best committee is a committee of three, of whom two are silent.

As soon as the new department was well on its feet Wade, who had no mind to become a Chinese official, resigned, and became Chinese Secretary under Sir John Bowring, Governor of Hong Kong. He was succeeded as Inspector-General by Mr. H. N. Lay, a very able man, the originator of the Lay-Osborn fleet which was commanded by Captain, afterwards Admiral, Sherard Osborn in 1863, a scheme which broke down owing to the faithlessness of the Chinese Government. Lay, clever as he was, had the misfortune to be what the French call a *mauvais coucheur* in affairs, and his demands upon the Chinese were rather more peremptory and dictatorial than they were prepared to admit; the result was a quarrel and Hart was appointed in his place. There were, therefore, two Inspectors-General before Hart. Nobody denies the powers of the latter as an organizer—least of all did Sir Thomas Wade question them; on the contrary he was, perhaps, Sir Robert Hart's greatest admirer, and far too generous even to hint at the fact that the service was his own child. I did not share his admiration of his successor and we had many arguments upon the subject. Had Wade, who was loyalty itself, lived to see the Boxer riots and read

the two articles in an English magazine in which, when the trouble was over, Hart professed that the Boxer rising was a patriotic endeavour, and practically advised the Boxers to begin over again with the proviso that they should have a care to be better equipped and prepared, I think that he would have come round to my opinion.

Sir Robert Hart knew that his articles would fly under the seas by cable; he also knew, none better, the effect that they would produce; how sweet his words would be to the Empress Tsŭ Hsi, to her eunuchs and the whole Court over which they ruled and before whom he bowed the knee! In the meantime honours were showered upon him. He was made a baronet, and at one time Lord Salisbury who, great as he was, never quite seemed to recognize the importance and needs of China, actually appointed him to be British Minister at Peking, a post which, happily, he did not take up. What Lord Salisbury failed to see was that, great as Hart's influence with the Chinese undoubtedly was, that influence would die the death the day he left their service to enter ours. They would have looked upon him as a turncoat who had wormed himself into their secrets in order to use them on our behalf, and he would have had far less influence than any average Englishman promoted in the ordinary course. Nay more; it might conceivably, indeed it probably would, have wrecked the Customs service. There were not lacking mandarins who would gladly have returned to the old system of bribery and squeeze, and would have been ready to do all in their power under the guise of patriotic objections to get rid of an organization which was death to their methods and of all the foreigners who controlled it. The cry would be: "See the danger of admitting the foreign devils to our councils." Nobody knew this better than Hart himself; moreover, had he accepted the post he would have been making a great monetary sacrifice and would have given up what was practically an autocracy for a position which, however honourable, would have placed him under an oversight to which he had long been a stranger.

Sir Robert Hart's attitude after the Boxer affair showed how he clung to the goodwill of the Tartar Government, and how little he cared what his countrymen must think of him so long as he

might retain the favour of the Empress Tsŭ Hsi—the "old Buddha"—and her creatures.

No sketch of Peking, however slight, is possible without some mention of that remarkable man. He was a maker of history, and may have been a good friend to China. To Europe he certainly was not; but he was an excellent friend to Sir Robert Hart, and to those whose careers, in the interest of his own, he chose to push.

The British Legation, as I first saw it before it was pulled about and vulgarized, was certainly a very striking place, with huge courtyards shaded by trees, among them the famous lace-bark pine* which is such a feature in Northern China; immediately inside the courtyard, mounting guard over a picturesquely roofed stately hall or pavilion open to the winds of heaven, were two great stone *shi-dzŭ* (lions), grinning vain defiance at the foreign devils who had invaded the sanctuary over which they watched, then a space, beyond that a second open hall, and after that the minister's quarters decorated in the most classical Chinese fashion—the last word of Pekingese art.

In one of Lord Elgin's picturesque despatches—to Lord Malmesbury if my memory serves me—but that is immaterial—he wrote that he could not better describe the desolation of Nanking, the ancient Southern Capital, than by saying that while riding through the city he flushed a cock-pheasant. Had he been as well acquainted with China then as he was afterwards, he would have known that this was but evidence of the great luxury of space which the Chinese nobles allowed themselves—their palaces were surrounded by grounds as broad as, or broader than, the gardens of suburban villas at Putney or Richmond. That of the old Dukes of Liang was exceptionally rich in elbow room. One night—to follow Lord Elgin's lead—one of our escort men, who kept fowls and had been sorely tried by depredations, shot two foxes close to his quarters. There was no hunt and no poultry committee at Peking, so he had to take the law into his own hands. There was a legend that even wolves had been seen in Peking in severe winters. I at once fell in love with the old Liang Kung Fu and I was savage when the great open halls—such a picture of the past—were bricked

* Pinus Bungeana.

up and turned into chanceries and offices, which might well have been placed elsewhere. No wonder the very stone lions tried to growl! The beautiful Liang Kung Fu! I wonder what it looks like now after fifty years of vandal ministers and the Boxer siege!

Saurin and I dined with Wade that night—an excellent dinner; the Chinese are first rate cooks—for cooking is a fine art in which they excel, probably because it does not involve a knowledge of perspective. What a host he was! so light in hand, so delicate in his wit, so full of conversation, the edge of which was sharpened by reading in many tongues. For Wade was no dried up sinologue—skilled as he was in the learning of the Chinese, he had kept himself well on a level with the times by reading all that was best in the literature of the West; but the memories of his long and varied experiences gave to his talk a flavour rich, varied, and outside of the common.

In poetry he was eclectic—devoted to the great classic singers of all countries. For Tennyson he had no great admiration—said he was the sort of boy who would be sent up for good once a week—and yet I have known the tears come into his eyes when he was quoting a stanza from the poems of some far lesser light. If he read aloud a favourite passage, something that touched his heart, his voice would break, compelling his listener to feel with him. What a lovable man he was! He was so sympathetic, so modest in talking of his own work, so generous in his estimate of that of others; deeply though unostentatiously religious, brave as a Bayard, devoted to duty, Sir Thomas Wade was one of those men in whom our public service is happily rich, men who for a mere pittance as compared with what they might have earned in other walks of life, and with very little prospect of high honours, are content to pass their lives in exile, making light of health, risking death as he often did, and sacrificing to the interests of the Empire all the attractions of social, literary and artistic life, happy only in the thought that they are spending themselves for their country.

Wade was very much pleased when I told him of my ambition to learn Chinese and promised to help me as much as he could, and most kindly was that promise fulfilled, for in about a fortnight he

brought me the first two or three sheets of a series of conversational exercises which afterwards developed into the "Yü-yen Tsŭ-êrh chi," a book of the greatest value.

It was the irony of fate that, essentially a scholar by nature, the line which his scholarship had taken forced him into an official groove, which was outside the scope of his wishes but from which there was no escape. He would have been so happy working at philology. He often used to express to me his longing to be at rest in some congenial seat of learning, there to pursue his studies and literary labours. His wish was gratified at last; but not before sticking manfully at his post he had become minister and K.C.B.; for when he retired in 1883, he settled at Cambridge, where he became professor of Chinese, with no pupils, as he lamented to me, and where twelve years later he died. One of my greatest treasures, which never leaves me, is a little old shabby Bible which he gave me at Peking fifty years ago. Dear Wade!

Not long after my arrival in Peking the great heat set in, and the thermometer rose to 108° in the shade; the smells became intolerable—it was as if the city were one vast shrine in honour of Venus Cloacina—it was time to fly to the hills. Saurin and I had engaged a lovely Buddhist temple called Pi Yün Ssŭ, the Temple of the Azure Clouds, and thither we rode out one fine day in July, passing over a beautiful plain studded with farmsteads picturesquely shaded by tall trees, prosperous villages, and burial places, the romantic charm of which apparently compensates the Chinese peasant in death for the dreariness in which he contentedly passes his life—a mechanical process of eating, drinking and sleeping without hope, without ambition, without more thought for the morrow than is involved in ploughing and sowing, reaping and threshing.

The trees which bear witness to the loving care with which the graveyards are tended, and make the villages look so snug and homelike, were a delight. Groves of poplars, ailanthus, the aromatic cedrela and willows, cast refreshing lights and shades, good to look upon. Not far from Pa Pao Shan stands a noble group of the maidenhair tree, Salisburia adiantifolia, while the cemeteries are darkly shaded by tall Chinese junipers, and the weird lace-

bark pine, Pinus Bungeana, whose stems and branches, richly embroidered with silver patches, gleam ghostlike among the more brilliant foliage.

Nestled among the picturesquely wooded recesses of the western mountains, some twelve to fifteen miles from Peking, are a number of temples, each more enchanting than the last, marvels of architecture, decorated with all the skill in which Chinese art excels. Here at least there is no decay—no ruin. Worm and weather are kept at bay by the offerings of the faithful who come to *Kwang Miao*, to pay homage to the temple, and by the few dollars for which the priests are willing to hire out their guest-chambers to the foreign devils seeking a refuge from the pestilential terrors of the urban summer.

Quite one of the most beautiful of these was the Temple of the Azure Clouds. As picturesque as its name, it was built in tiers on the mountain side, and on each terrace was a shrine—statues of black marble and white, alti-rilievi and bassi-rilievi portrayed kings and warriors, gods and goddesses and fabled monsters, all of rare workmanship, legends writ in stone that the study of a lifetime would hardly suffice to master, and all set in a surrounding of rock work, fountains, woods and gardens before which an European landscape gardener might commit suicide in sheer despair. From the highest of these terraces, in front of a marvellous Indian idol with ten heads in tiers of three surmounted by one, there is a grand panoramic view, with the sad-coloured walls and quaint towers of Peking in the dim distance.

Our quarters were ideal. Our dining-room was an open pavilion, surrounded by a pond and a rockery which looked as if, like poetry, it had been born not made, feathered with ferns and clothed with a profusion of mosses; high trees sheltered us from the scorching sun and a pond fed by an icy fountain cooled our drinks to perfection.

Here we led the simple life—rose and bathed in the pond soon after daybreak—a frugal breakfast at eight—work till three—then dinner—after that a ride or a scramble over the beauty-haunted mountains, peering into the homes of fairies and wood-nymphs and heavenly beings; back for tea at eight or nine—a smoke—and

then bed, to be awakened long before the sun by the silvery tinkling of the bell for matins. Sometimes in the dead hours of the night, dreaming, I hear the music of a little bell and know that I am being wafted across fifty years of memory, over twelve thousand miles of sea and land, to the Temple of the Azure Clouds, where the sacristan is as of old calling the good monks to morning prayer.

I had my teacher with me and was hard at work. There is a pretty fable which tells how Confucius and his disciples in surroundings not more romantic than these used to work on into the night, studying by the light of the fire-flies. Here, too, the pretty creatures swarm, tiny wandering electric lights, winging their bright way among the shrubs and trees of the sacred gardens; but we, more prosaic than the sages, are content to work by day, letting our evenings treasure idleness. What more fascinating study can there be than that of a strange language opening out a whole vista of new thoughts and ideas? But if that language be of the East, the expression of all the poetic imagery, of the original conceptions, of the unexpected twists and turns of the volutes of the Oriental brain, then the charm is complete. There is, moreover, as an incentive the difficulty: at each step gained the sense of achievement, of victory. In the absence of books the task is well-nigh hopeless.

When I reached Peking there was one much thumbed and tattered copy of Medhurst's dictionary for the use of the whole Legation. Naturally it was wanted for the student interpreters: Morrison's dictionary was out of print, and Giles, whose great work is now the authority, had himself, so far as China was concerned, not yet been invented. My teacher, a quaint little man, so transparently thin that I felt almost able to see the garlic which otherwise so richly asserted itself, knew no syllable of any tongue save his own, so it was a hard matter to come to terms. Substantives—a table, a chair, a cupboard—it was easy enough to acquire; some verbs are capable of being denoted by signs. But adjectives! How explain that you wish to know the difference between a good table and a bad? Great was my joy when, one fine day, Wade produced the first page of his book in MS. Then matters began to

go swimmingly, and by the end of the summer I began to babble —very childishly—but we must totter before we can walk.

Students have an easier time of it now, Wade, Giles, Hillier and others have beaten a golden road for them and there are plenty of books. Soon, moreover, we hope to see a properly equipped school of Oriental languages established in London, so that a young man may start his work abroad with some previous equipment, however slight, to help him in overcoming the first difficulties, saving him much vexation and disheartening delay.

We passed the days of our cloistered life in calm and peaceful contemplation as beseemed sojourners sheltered by a Buddhist monastery. The studious mornings were relieved by afternoon excursions as varied as they were delightful. There were many interesting temples to be visited—among others a fane of great sanctity called Wo Fo Ssŭ, the temple of the Sleeping Buddha, a gigantic figure lying down with a pair of soft velvet boots by the couch ready to be put on when it should please the Wise One to awaken from the slumber of centuries. Some shrines were perched up like eagles' nests upon almost inaccessible crags, others were easily reached. The monks and the poor peasants who lived around us were always kind, civil, and ever welcoming to the red-haired devils.

All had some element of attraction; a favourite wandering was through the romantic gardens and grounds of what had been the Summer Palace—and yet it was sad to see the charred ruins of what must once have been a succession of scenes each one more beautiful than the last, the final masterpiece of gorgeous Oriental luxury and splendour. The Summer Palace really consisted of three parks, of which Yuen Ming Yuen, "the round, bright garden," was one, and the name became among foreigners the generic name for all three. The park that we used to visit was called Wan Shao Shan, "the Hill of Ten Thousand Longevities." It was strictly forbidden ground, but the soldiers in charge were a poor tatterdemalion crew, and a silver key opened the gates. The third park had an even more poetic name that might fit an extravaganza in a Western theatre, Yü Chuan Shan, the "Hill of the Fountain of Jewels." In the gardens of the Hill of the Ten Thousand

Longevities we passed from court to court, from terrace to terrace, where the wicked fire had hardly spared a stone—carvings, the loving handiwork of consummate artists, had all fallen in scales, gradually being ground to powder, lurking places for scorpions and lizards and centipedes. Crazy and crank were the steps that led from one level to another, steps that had once been trodden by the eunuch-guarded beauties of the Court of a magnificent Chien Lung.

All was one tangle of climbing plants, brambles, wild vines; such stones as remained were overgrown with mosses and lichens, silver-backed ferns, wild asparagus; strange, sweet-scented herbs peered from out of the crannies and chinks. Here and there a tiny pavilion, and just one little bronze shrine, a miracle of art, which had defied the devouring flames, only served to accentuate the devastation. At our feet lay the great lake, the surface almost smothered with the pink blush of the lotus flowers, now at their best, and on it were a few humble fishermen casting their nets for such poor, muddy fish as the waters of North China can produce. To think of the gaudy court that once housed here an Emperor like Solomon in all his pomp, surrounded by ladies " all glorious within," gorgeously-clad eunuchs, officers, ministers, and then to look upon the squalor and filth of its present guardians!—wretched, half-starved, hardly clothed creatures, with such small pay as should have been theirs probably no more than an arrear never to be realized. No wonder they fell and betrayed their trust before the seduction of a Mexican dollar, even though it was offered by a foreign devil.

By the beginning of August the great heat was due to pass away. There came a mighty thunderstorm, like the bursting of giant shells. Hailstones as big as pigeons' eggs, made up of a nodule of ice, a layer of snow and then an outer coat of ice, came rattling down in volleys, driving scorpions and centipedes and other horrors to take shelter in our rooms. In three hours the thermometer fell thirty degrees, and would not rise again till the following summer. It was time to fly back citywards.

In the two or three days that it took to pack up our various belongings the torrents of rain had wrought a transformation scene. The dry fields and banks were all bright with a young green growth,

and in the meantime the giant millet had sprung to a height of some twelve or thirteen feet, so that we rode along the dense paths like Gulliver in the fields of Brobdingnag, guessing at our way.

Now came a season during which the weather was such a joy that life was worth the living just for its own sake. Those of us who could claim an immunity from official work for two or three weeks made ready for a trip to Mongolia or some other happy hunting ground. Saurin, after two years, had well earned a holiday, and was bound with another man for an expedition beyond the Great Wall, and I, having a few days at my disposal before the next mail, agreed to go with him as far as Ku Pei Kŏu, the great pass between China and Mongolia.

Among the great monuments of the world there can be few more striking than those of the North of China. Peking itself, that grim and grey city with all its mysteries and tragic secrets, is difficult to beat. The Great Wall of China at Ku Pei Kŏu, a most lovely spot, where it is still in good repair, overtopping the glorious peaks of the mountains, climbing for miles and miles up and down precipices where there would seem to be hardly foothold for a goat, let alone for a bricklayer and his hod, is a marvel. In places which I saw once when I followed its course for some two hundred miles, it has now fallen under stress of weather and neglect into mere heaps of rubble. But at Ku Pei Kŏu it is as imposing as it was when the Emperor Shih built it, some two hundred and thirty years B.C., to hold the Mongol hordes at bay.

It is perhaps an impertinence to speak of the Tombs of the Ming Emperors in the same breath with the great relics of Egyptian magnificence. Here we can count at most five centuries—there as many millenniums. The great Pyramid of Cheops and the Sphinx are in a category by themselves ; and yet in " The Thirteen Tombs " there is something of the same largeness of thought, the same fight for immortality. About five miles away from the little town of Chang Ping Chou—famous, or rather infamous, as the scene of the torture of the British and Sikh prisoners of war in 1860—is a wide plain surrounded by hill scenery of great beauty.

In the midst of this plain, standing out in solemn isolation, rises a magnificent stone gateway, designed by some rarely skilled artist,

by far the finest specimen of Chinese architecture that I ever saw altogether a most imposing work. Some way beyond this wonder is a second gateway of brick, roofed with imperial tiles, leading to a large, square granite building, cruciform inside, in which is a colossal marble tortoise, bearing a high, upright tablet, graven on both sides with inscriptions, the one telling how the tombs were built for the Ming Emperors, and the other how they were restored by the Emperor Chîen Lung in the eighteenth century. At each corner of this building is a triumphal column. Then comes the famous avenue of colossal figures in double pairs—the one pair sitting, the other standing. Lions, Chih Ling (Kylins), camels, elephants, scaled and winged dragons wreathed in flames, horses, warriors in full armour, with breastplates reminding one of Medusa's head, carrying in their hands swords and maces; warriors in repose, with their swords sheathed and their hands gravely folded on their breasts; councillors; chamberlains. Beyond this dumb and motionless procession, which looked as if it had been congealed and turned into marble by some magician's wand, a broken and ruinous stone road, with decayed granite and marble bridges, leads the pilgrim in melancholy fashion to the Chief Temple, or Funeral Palace, where the great Emperor Yung Lo lies canonized under the name of Wên. The spot is one of rare beauty, for in a country where even the humblest peasant must needs sleep his long sleep in some choice place, the Emperors of the glorious Ming Dynasty would naturally choose for their graves a sanctuary worthy of their race.

Behind the great shrine, decorated with all the sumptuous splendour of which Chinese art is the mistress, is a hillock, an artificial mound covered with trees and shrubs; in the speaking silence of that fair retreat, far from the madding crowd, lie the remains of the Son of Heaven. There is a Chinese proverb which says, "Better a living beggar covered with sores than a dead Emperor." I wonder!

We rode back to Chang Ping Chou, our horses terrified at the great images, in which heaven knows what horrors they saw. It was a lovely night, and the harvest moon rose in full glory. After supper I was impelled to go back, at any rate as far as the mysterious Avenue of Statues. I felt that, like Melrose, it should be visited "by the pale moonlight." I am glad that I had that inspiration. When

I reached the avenue the moonbeams were casting their spell upon the great, silent, motionless procession. Grim and gruesome flickers were playing upon the marble features, showing a sort of life in death ; near the further end a vagabond crew—in England we should have said of gipsies—had encamped for the night, and were crouching round their fire, smoking. The flames cast dancing and uncertain lights and shadows upon the giant figures till I half felt as if they were moving. Far away in the gloom were the thirteen shrines, half hidden, nestling among the dark, pine-clad hills—altogether a weird and ghostly scene which I can never describe, but which lives with me to-day, after all these years.

* * * * * * *

The event of our lives in the autumn of 1865 was the arrival of the new British minister, Sir Rutherford Alcock, with his family, in succession to Sir Frederic Bruce. Sir Rutherford was an able man who would probably have made his mark in any profession and in any position. But he had so fitted his life to the peculiar exigencies of China and of the public service in that country, where he had been for many years a Consul, that his name as the follower of Sir Frederic was indicated.

CHAPTER XVII

1865

PEKING

MR. ALCOCK'S first great promotion to be Consul-General in Japan, newly opened to foreigners by Lord Elgin's treaty of 1858, though it answered well enough, was based upon a mistake of the English Government, which was under the delusion that China and Japan were one and the same thing, and that experience in the one country must of necessity specially fit a man to take up work in the other. It was like what Victor Hugo said when he was asked whether he had ever read Goethe. "Non, mais j'ai lu quelques traductions de Schiller; et après tout, Goethe-Schiller, Schiller-Goethe, c'est toujours la même chose." Well, China and Japan were anything but "la même chose," and perhaps Mr. Alcock's life and experiences in China were rather a hindrance to him than otherwise, as they undoubtedly were in the case of some of the first merchants who established themselves there.

However, Mr. Alcock came well through the ordeal, showing great courage and determination, and never allowing any affront to England to pass unnoticed. Never perhaps did he show more moral courage than he did when one fine day in writing to the Japanese Government he signed himself Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary instead of Consul-General, with the intimation to the British Foreign Office that they might accept or reject what he had done, but that it was necessary in the event of his rejection that whoever should be appointed should, in order to hold his own both with the Japanese Government and with the foreign colleagues, hold that rank. It was a most audacious stroke and it succeeded,

because he was quite right, but it probably is the one and only case of a man accrediting himself as minister to a foreign Power. Whether he also named himself K.C.B. history records not. But at any rate the honour was most deservedly bestowed upon him.

Sir Rutherford Alcock was a man of great ability and high courage. During his official life in the Far East he had plenty of opportunities to give proof of both. In early life he had been a surgeon, and had been attached to the British Legion in Spain, where he earned no little reputation for a skill which stood him in good stead when the temple occupied by the British Legation at Yedo (Tokio) was attacked by Rônins in July, 1861, and poor Laurence Oliphant and others were so badly wounded. Oliphant, who had nothing but a hunting-crop to ward off the cruel sword-cuts, must have been killed had it not been for the merciful beam of the low, narrow passage in which he was fighting, which caught the worst blows. For long years afterwards the deep cuts on the woodwork were still visible, but the last time I was in Japan, in 1906, I went to see the place, and found that the temple authorities had removed the tell-tale beam.

When he returned from the Peninsula he went back to his profession as a lecturer; but rheumatism, due to exposure, had crippled his hands and hindered him as an operator; moreover, he was bitten with the spirit of adventure, and in 1844 he accepted an appointment as Consul at the newly-opened port of Fu Chou. But it was at Shanghai a year or two later that he made his mark, and there it was that he achieved what was the most successful work of his life in the establishment of the municipality, a new and original venture, needing great tact and judgment in order to avoid international and other jealousies, besides involving a distinct talent for organization. It was altogether a formidable undertaking, but it succeeded, and laid the foundation of similar institutions throughout the Treaty Ports of the Far East.

When Sir Rutherford returned to China as Minister he was far more in his element as a diplomatic agent than he had ever been in Japan. He had an intimate knowledge of Chinese affairs, which it is in no way derogatory to say that he had not of Japanese politics. In Japan he, like everybody else, was under the influence of the old

Dutch fallacies, and he did not fully realize the relations between the Mikado and the Tycoon. The great scholars, such as Satow and Aston and others, had not yet pricked the bubble and babble about spiritual and temporal Emperors, and all the other nonsense of those days. Sir Harry Parkes had the luck to profit by the new-born knowledge. Sir Rutherford was the victim of the old tradition. But when he arrived in China he was master of the situation. He was thoroughly at home and up to every move on the board.

He was a kind and considerate chief, and we all liked him except in the neighbourhood of mail-day. Sir Rutherford's weakness was the idea that he was essentially a writer—he would have been a greater man if he had never written a book about a country which he did not understand, or a grammar of a language which he could neither speak nor read nor write. But we all have our weaknesses ; his was authorship. The despatches which he used to write contained excellent stuff, but they were spoilt by being spun out to interminable lengths of impossible verbiage. To copy those effusions with the thermometer at 108° in the shade, with a double sheet of blotting-paper between my hand and the foolscap, and a basin of water to dip my fingers in from time to time, was like being private secretary to Satan in the nethermost regions.

At the Tsung Li Ya-mên, the ministry of foreign affairs, Sir Rutherford was perfect. However knotty might be the point which he had to argue, however patent the trickery which he had to resent, he was always calm, always courteous, and so the Chinese liked him as much as we did. He certainly was *persona grata* with the Regent, Prince Kung, who was the very real head of the Tsung Li Ya-mên.*

The Prince Regent was at this time a tall, well-favoured man, shortsighted and pitted with smallpox, which in Chinese eyes would be no hindrance to his good looks, for indeed a Chinaman hardly thinks of himself as complete until he has " put forth the heavenly flowers." Messrs. Bland and Backhouse quote a decree of the wretched Emperor Tung Chih in which he announces " we have

* Sir Rutherford retired in 1871. But he lived for many years afterwards in London, devoting himself to all manner of work for the benefit of the poor, but especially in connection with hospitals, for which his early training and technical knowledge specially fitted him. He died, greatly respected, in 1897 at the age of eighty-eight.

had the good fortune this month to contract smallpox "—in the next month he ascended the Dragon and was wafted on high.* The Emperor's edict might serve as a text for the anti-vaccinationists, nor would his death in the following month have injured their cause, for he was such a mass of disease that he was already foredoomed, so the " heavenly flowers " were not by themselves accountable for his end.

The first time that I saw Prince Kung was in the month of May, a few days after my arrival at Peking. He came to the Legation to discuss business with Wade, accompanied by two other ministers of the Tsung Li Ya-mên. The Prince was in high spirits, laughing and joking merrily; he was always good-humoured and genial, but that day there was a special reason for his cheerfulness; he had just gone through one of those alternate storms and calms, often incident to Oriental life, but specially frequent where the government is conducted with " the suspended curtain "—that is to say by an Empress who may not be seen. To me he was very courteous and kind, and whenever we met afterwards he had always a little friendly greeting for me, never failing to chaff me about my single eyeglass which used to furnish him with an excuse for interrupting an awkward discussion and so give him time for an answer. He was very clever in availing himself of it; perhaps that was the reason why I found grace in his sight.

Hardly more than a stone's throw from the British Legation are the walls of the Forbidden City. Of what might be taking place inside that sacrosanct enclosure we knew no more than what that most venerable of all publications, the *Peking Gazette*, was allowed to tell us. People used to talk with well-informed superiority of *coups-d'état* and Palace intrigues, but it was not until the appearance of Messrs. Bland and Backhouse's book, " China under the Dowager Empress," that the outside world was made aware of the intimate history of that masterful woman's reign; for a reign it was throughout. Her co-Empress was a cipher and the Emperors whom for show's sake she enthroned were mere puppets. The pages of that *roman vécu* are so fascinating that it is difficult for any reader to put the book down, but

* " China under the Empress Dowager," I.O.P. Bland and E. Backhouse.

to those who have lived under the black pall of ignorance in which the foreign community of Peking was shrouded it is a revelation.

We can now appreciate the heroic courage with which Tsŭ Hsi, then a mere girl of twenty-two, defeated the conspiracies of the princes who, on the death of her husband, the Emperor Hsien Fêng in 1861, took her child, the baby Emperor, from her and tried to usurp the Regency. It was a master-stroke of craft in so young a woman to paralyse the conspirators by purloining the seal without the impression of which no nomination to the throne was legitimate. We know how Prince Kung, the intimate personal enemy of the plotters, and the handsome young guardsman, Jung Lu, her kinsman, her playmate, and through life her more than trusty friend, came to the rescue, and we can understand how it was that the former, her brother-in-law, though he had to go through alternations of favour and disgrace, was always summoned back in moments of storm and stress when she needed his help and advice.

When I was at Peking Tsŭ Hsi was a mystery; no foreigner even knew what was her origin—some went so far as to say that she was a mere slave girl; as a matter of fact her birth is now known* to have been of the highest. She was a lady of the Yehonala clan, a family descended from Yangkunu, the great Manchu Prince whose daughter married the founder of the Manchu Dynasty in China. She was therefore of right royal descent, and her pedigree was without a stain, though her father had held no higher rank than that of an officer in one of the eight banner corps.

The first wife of the Emperor Hsien Fêng died before he ascended the Dragon throne. When the period of mourning for his father, Tao Kwang, came to an end in 1852, a number of maidens from the chief Manchu families were sent for, out of whom the widow of the dead monarch was to choose a certain number suitable for the harem of the Son of Heaven; among them were the two ladies who as Tsŭ An and Tsŭ Hsi, Dowager Empress and Empress Mother, were to play such conspicuous parts in Chinese history.

Those who are interested in studying the last phase of the great Ching Dynasty must seek its story in Messrs. Bland and Backhouse's

* See Messrs. Bland and Backhouse.

pages. It will repay them. Few princes have left this world in more dramatic fashion than the Empress Tsŭ Hsi—the Old Buddha, as she loved to be called—whose last bequest to her people was the advice never again to allow a woman to exercise the Supreme Power, and not to allow the eunuchs of the Palace to interfere in affairs of State; she who had been ruled by such scoundrels as the two favourite eunuchs, Li Lien Ying and An Tê Hai!—a mass of contradictions to the last. That she was a woman of amazing ability is certain; competent authorities have praised her scholarship and held up her edicts as models of style; she was witty, though her wit sometimes was cruel, as when she told the murderous Governor of Tai Yuan Fu that "the price of coffins was going up"—a hint to commit suicide without delay, lest worse befall him; as, in spite of her protection, it ultimately did.

She was tyrannical and vindictive, yet she contrived to inspire affection and to persuade the people that she was kind-hearted; she was false and treacherous, but her power of attraction was supreme and the love between Jung Lu and herself, dating from boy-and-girl days, long before she entered the Palace never waned. Unless she has been much maligned she had much the worst side of the character of Catherine the Great; like our own Elizabeth she was terrible in her rage, irresistible in her gentler moments. Altogether a woman of infinite variety, a scholar, a stateswoman, and an artist.

The edict in which she published to the world her degradation of Prince Kung in April, 1865, is like an Æschylean chorus. Success followed by insolence; insolence by Nemesis. I have no doubt that his somewhat abrupt manner might have been very offensive to august ears; but if it be true that he told the two Empresses that if they sat upon their thrones behind the curtain it was because he had so willed it, there is no wonder that an Empress imbued with the spirit of a Tudor queen should have refused to brook such language as that. In a month, however, the necessary man was once more called into favour, and then it was that I first saw him.

I had a great admiration for Prince Kung. It was impossible not to be attracted by his *bonhomie* and his pleasant manner. To

me, as I have said, he was always specially courteous. I do not suppose that he had any greater love of the foreign devils than the rest of his countrymen; but if he hated us he had the wisdom to mask his dislike. The documents which successive crises have brought to light have taught us many a lesson. Your Chinese gentleman is a great scribe, and rather than suffer his pen to be idle he will console himself in difficult moments by writing down voluminous indiscretions; and so it has become pretty evident that even those among the Chinese statesmen who professed the greatest friendship for us in their hearts hated us. The Empress Tsŭ Hsi herself, when she coaxed and talked soft nonsense to the wives of the Foreign Ministers, told Jung Lu that she knew how to win them to her side with rich gifts and honeyed words. How she fooled the dear ladies to their hearts' content is well told by Messrs. Bland and Backhouse. Nor is this feeling to be wondered at. We were self-invited guests in her country; we needed the trade, export and import, of the Chinese who, until we came, were self-sufficing; opium and grey shirtings notwithstanding, in their view we brought nothing but trouble upon them.

Apart from his undoubted charm of manner, however much or however little it might mean, the Prince was a man of undoubted talent and strength of character. He was a very young man in 1860, not more than twenty-three or twenty-four years old, and utterly inexperienced in affairs, when his brother, the Emperor Hsien Fêng, who was dying by inches, bowed to the storm of foreign invasion and fled to Jêhol, leaving him in Peking as his representative, with full powers to carry on the Government. It was a fateful moment. The Allies were victorious. Yuen Ming Yuen, the summer palace, was in flames; the foreign barbarians were in possession of the Anting Mên, the northern gate of Peking; a number of prisoners, among them Parkes and Loch, were in the hands of the Chinese, by whom they had been shamefully treated; Prince Kung realized the position, and at the risk of his own life handed over the prisoners to their chiefs. He acted in the nick of time. Hardly had he done so than a messenger arrived post haste from Jêhol, ordering the instant execution of the prisoners. Had Prince Kung carried out the Emperor's edict it is difficult to say

what the consequences would have been. Certainly Peking would have been razed to the ground, and the Tartar dynasty would have been exterminated half a century before its knell was finally rung.

Prince Kung died in 1898. Had he lived a few years longer I believe that his sage advice and statesmanship, joined to the persistent warnings of Jung Lu, would have saved the Empress from the fatal step which she took of fostering the Boxer outrages, and the further disgrace of disavowing and executing the very men with whom she had conspired, and whom she had egged on to a doom from which she did not feel herself powerful enough to save them. But she listened to the dupes and ruffians who believed in the magic rites of the Boxers, and in spite of all her blandishments to the easily-gulled Legation ladies before and after, did all in her power to urge on the destruction of the besieged ministers, even when she was sending them presents of fruit and sweetmeats!

In vain did Jung Lu try to impress upon her that the bombardment "was worse than an outrage, it was a piece of stupidity;"* had the Prince been alive he no doubt, with forty more years' experience of affairs to his credit, would have grasped the situation in 1900 as he did in 1860, and her two most trusted advisers would have saved the old Buddha's face. No woman, empress or peasant, ever had a more devoted friend than she had in Jung Lu—but single-handed he was no match for the army of scoundrels and eunuchs by whom she was gulled.

Prince Kung's signature was peculiar. I believe that it honestly represented his character. He did not sign his name or his title, but "Wu ssŭ hsin," "no private heart," *i.e.* "disinterested."

Prince Kung's right-hand man was Wên Hsiang, a Tartar statesman of great ability, whom it was a pleasure to meet. Like his chief, he was always conciliatory and prepossessing; had he had the Prince's strength and moral courage he might have achieved great things—but there he broke down. The two other ministers whom we met the oftenest were Tung and Hêng Chi—the former a portly, good-humoured gentleman with a great reputation as a man of letters, who had turned into Chinese verse a

* Bland and Backhouse; cf. "C'est pis qu'une faute, c'est une erreur" (Talleyrand on the murder of the Duc d'Enghien).

prose translation by Wade of Longfellow's Psalm of Life; the latter an old beau, his tail dyed and eked out with false hair as sedulously as the head-dress of an aged Court dame in Europe. He was very carefully attired, generally in a robe of pearl-grey silk turned up with blue. Sir Plume himself was not more justly vain of his amber snuffbox than Hêng Chi was of his tiny snuff bottle with its emerald green jade stopper, and the priceless bead of the same from which his peacock feather hung; his red button was of "baby-face" coral, and as for the pipe, chopsticks all studded with seed pearls, and other small treasures which were hidden in the recesses of his velvet boot and the delicate sugar-plums and restorative drugs which he produced from the same receptacle, they baffled description. A dear little old man withal, merry and well preserved, whom we all treated with great respect in gratitude for his kindness to Parkes and Loch when in their hideous captivity they stood sorely in need of a friend. Was he so very fond of the barbarian? Listen!

M. de Mas was Spanish Minister at Peking. He had negotiated a Treaty which for many months, even two or three years, could not be ratified on account of the many changes of ministry at Madrid. At last the ratification came, and M. de Mas, before going home, went to pay a farewell visit to His Excellency Hêng Chi. Now the said Excellency, being past seventy years of age, had a little boy, some four or five years old, of whom he was inordinately proud—he was the apple of his eye. The polite Spaniard, knowing this, asked to see the wonderful product. Highly flattered, Hêng Chi sent for the child, who arrived with his thumb in his mouth, after the manner of all children, Asiatic as well as European. "Make your bow to His Excellency!" said the proud father. Not a sign. The order was repeated, not once but twice. At last the little creature, taking its thumb out of its mouth, solemnly uttered the street cry, "Kwei tzŭ!" ("Devil!") The intimate education of the harem was revealed, and poor old Hêng Chi was smothered in confusion. There is a general idea that all high mandarins are great scholars. That is not always the case. Our old dandy friend, for instance, was as little of a grammarian as Mrs. Squeers. Nevertheless he had all the Chinese gentleman's

reverence for letters, and kept a learned secretary to read to him and keep him up to the mark.

* * * * * * *

The terrible part of winter at Peking is the drought; month after month the Emperor goes to the Temple of Heaven to pray for rain or snow; month after month the god, whoever he may be, shuts his ears as fast as Ulysses' ship's crew. The cold is intense, witness the frozen river and sea; the fierce wind, tearing over the desert of Gobi, dries men up till their skins become parched, tight and powdery; their lips are chapped and the black dust, that scourge of Northern China, seems to penetrate the very marrow of their bones. Russia was not colder; but in Russia we had the brightness and the kindly snow, and the tinkling of the sleigh bells gave the winter life and gaiety. In Peking the winter was as gloomy as remorse. All communication with the outer world was cut off. Twice in the course of rather more than three months we received mails brought across Siberia and the frozen Baikal lake. We could not help feeling that we were caught like rats in a trap. Had the people chosen they could have made short work of us, and every now and then, by way of cheering us, our Chinese writers would bring in reports that on such and such a day there would be a rising against us. To these uncomfortable rumours we paid no heed. Indeed, in spite of some discomfort and the absence of "fireside enjoyments, home-born happiness," I passed the time cheerily enough. I had plenty to do, and was getting on with the language, which I used to practise in fair weather upon the curio dealers of the Chinese city.

There was in especial a delightful little man, a bookseller in the Liu Li Chang—the Paternoster Row of Peking—who was a perfect cyclopædia of knowledge in all that concerned Chinese art; besides his rare books he always had a very small but very choice collection of beautiful objects—pottery, jade, crystal, cloisonné enamel, pietra dura; and at the feet of that Gamaliel, I used to listen to much antiquarian lore from a teacher who loved his subject and revered it. Over a cup of tea, or in summer of an iced decoction of date-plum juice, he would spin stories by the hour.

He would tell how the last potter of the Lang family died two hundred and fifty years before, and how his secrets and recipes, inimitable treasures, were buried with him; how the Ming Emperor Ching Tâi (A.D. 1450) would with his own sacred hands work at cloisonné enamel, called after him Ching Tâi Lan—the blue of Ching Tâi; how in the days of Chien Lung (1736–1796), the magnificent, a great patron of art, if a fine piece of crystal or jade were brought in as tribute from the western mountains, a committee of taste would sit to appraise its merits, deciding what shape should be given to it and to what artist it should be entrusted. A wonderful little man with a huge belly, which, as all men know, is the seat of learning, and in his case was choke full of it.

How pleased my small dilettante friend would have been if he could have foreseen that two or three specimens that came from him would find a home in the British Museum!* Not that he ever heard of such a place, but his ideas were out of all proportion to his stature, and the thought of a national collection of works of art would have appealed to his large and æsthetic soul.

"Que la vie d'un diplomate serait agréable sans les chers collègues!" once exclaimed an eminent ambassador. Peking in 1865–6 would have fitted his Excellency to a nicety. We were a very small body, and other foreigners, save a few missionaries, were there none. General Vlangaly, the Russian Minister, was always very friendly. We used to go prowling in all sorts of out-of-the-way corners of the Chinese city searching out works of art. Were we always quite honest with one another on those excursions? Perhaps we were more so when we were taking a constitutional on the broad tops of the mighty walls which separate the two cities, when the General would expatiate by the hour on the great qualities of the object of his admiration, Sir Frederic Bruce. There I could cry, Amen.

Had there been any of what is called "rank, beauty and fashion" at Peking, its favourite promenade would have been the wall. There we found peace and quiet,—for the public in-

* Bought at my sale by my old friend Sir Augustus Franks, and now in the collection bequeathed by him to the British Museum.

vaded it not,—and comparative immunity from the demon dust. It was wonderful to look over the great city—the two great cities —to gaze upon the roofs of the inviolable Palace Ground, and wonder what mysteries they were hiding. At the southern corner of the wall were the beautiful astronomical instruments, masterpieces in the interest of which European science entered into a happy alliance with Chinese art—the great Emperor Kăng Hsi with the Jesuit Father Verbiest—in order to furnish after two hundred and fifty years a prey for Prussian burglary. At intervals rose the great fantastic towers, threatening, cruel—suggesting unspeakable horrors; for in one of them, as we were told, dwelt the chief executioner, like Mauger the headsman in George Cruikshank's etching, watching over the Five Lords—broad choppers like butchers' instruments, on the handle of each of which is carved a grotesque human head.

Those who have wandered on the walls in the witching hours of night are said to have heard the sound of weird and unearthly strains, songs in which the Five Lords are wont to celebrate the bloody deeds in which for centuries and more they have played their part. Pray that you be not dealt with by the Benjamin of the Five Lords, for he is still young and skittish, not more than two hundred years old, loving to dally and toy with the heads of his victims, unlike his more reverend elders who will strike off your head at one blow, impressed with the serious nature of their duties.

No two countries had during the sixties so living an interest in China as England and Russia; with England it was a question of commerce; with Russia of commerce and frontier combined. Ever since Peter the Great's time there had been Russian missions, political and religious, in Peking—partly in the interests of the Albazines, a small Russian colony on the Amur transplanted to Peking, who long since adopted the Chinese language, dress and customs, but retained their religion. The northern mission was under the Archimandrite Palladius, the southern under the Minister. That is how it happened that when the Allied Armies were before Peking in 1860 the then Minister, General Ignatieff, admiringly celebrated by the Turks afterwards when he was

Ambassador at Constantinople for his talent in concealing the truth, tried to persuade Prince Kung that if only the Prince would yield to Russia's requests, he would be able to ward off all danger by interceding with Lord Elgin. Prince Kung, young and new to affairs as he was, saw through the trick; "Codlin's the friend, not Short," was no use, the fly had no mind to enter the spider's parlour.

Years after I met General Ignatieff at Contrexéville. How clever he was, and how well he gauged the Chinese! It was at the moment when the great Li Hung Chang was in Europe. Lord Salisbury flirted with him, and in the interest of Krupp and other firms the Kaiser made his children play about the great mandarin's knee and call him "Uncle Li." But it was all no use; Li went back to China and not a sixpenny order was given. How General Ignatieff and I laughed over the daily reports of all that sordid, commercial and absolutely barren love-making!

The Archimandrite Palladius, who had been in Peking ever since 1840, told me that he had never had any difficulty in holding intercourse with the people. The intermarriage of the Albazines with the Chinese had led to many conversions, and he, with the help of his three subaltern priests, was always able to keep up his services and schools.

There was no French Minister; M. De Bellonet was *chargé d'affaires,* a clever, very agreeable man who hated China and the Chinese, and cursed the day on which his fate sent him out of Europe. His chief delight was in plaguing the ministers of the Tsung Li Ya-mên. Rarely he left his own house; when he did it was either to "flanquer une pile" at the ministers, or to pay some inevitable visit of ceremony which he loathed. I asked him once why he never went to see any of the beautiful and curious sights in and around Peking. "À quoi bon?" he answered. "Lorsque je rentrerai à Paris je dirai à mes amis que j'ai vu tout cela; ça revient au même."

One day I went to call upon him and found him with a small gang of coolies making some improvements. I asked him how he managed to give his orders without knowing a word of Chinese. He answered: "Mon cher ami, j'ai ici le meilleur interprète du

monde—le Professeur Bambou "—and with that the little man viciously twirled a huge walking-stick. The coolies trembled.

He was very amusing and I liked him much, and was sorry when he made the great mistake of his life through not realizing the farness of the cry to Loch Awe. There was missionary trouble in Corea. De Bellonet felt certain that if he started a punitive expedition he would be supported by the Church and the Empress Eugénie. Promotion a certainty. But Corea is a long way off; it was further off in those days than it is now. My poor friend was disavowed, and after having been *chargé d'affaires* in China, was sent as second secretary to one of the Scandinavian courts. Humpty Dumpty's fall was not more terrible. As *attaché* he had a curious little Flibbertygibbet of a man, very clever but always in hot water, a never-failing source of amusement and study to Wade. The interpreter was M. Fontanier, who was murdered at Tientsing in the massacre of 1870. I shall allude to that story later on.

The Prussian Minister soon went on leave, and the Don had gone home to Spain hugging his precious treaty. At the American Legation we had as *chargé d'affaires* Dr. Wells Williams. He and his wife were a charming couple; no longer young, but both very handsome, like delightful old family portraits. They might have been members of the pilgrimage of the *Mayflower*. Dr. Wells Williams went out to China originally in some technical capacity in connection with the American missionary press at Canton; soon he drifted into sinological studies and wrote a dictionary and other works; but his *magnum opus* was "The Middle Kingdom," a book of great authority upon all Chinese matters up to the date which it reaches—a perfect cyclopædia of antiquarian, historical and political lore, a book of reference without which no man who cares for the Far East is completely furnished.

One evening when I was dining with him the talk turned upon paper currency. I made a note at the time of what he said, and reproduce it now as interesting at a time when we are going back to bank-notes of £1 and 10s. During the reign of the Emperor Shao Hsing of the Sung Dynasty (A.D. 1170) copper was scarce, so the Government issued two classes of Chao (notes), great notes (Ta

Chao) of the value of from one thousand to five thousand copper cash, and small notes (Hsiao Chao) worth from one hundred to seven hundred cash. Officers were appointed everywhere to issue and receive these notes. They were renewable within seven years, and fifteen cash in every thousand were deducted for the expense of making them. They were said to be Kung ssŭ pien—convenient for both public and private use—and Marco Polo mentions them with praise. Dr. Wells Williams was always interesting, and his wife had all the charm of beauty, motherly kindness and soft gentleness, illuminated by an intellect of no common order.

Besides General Vlangaly there were at the Russian Legation M. Glinka, second secretary, a great gentleman, and Dr. Pogojeff, a very clever doctor and a good friend of mine, hailing from Odessa. That, in addition to the Russian Archimandrite, was all the foreign community of Peking in 1865. Glancing back over this short sketch of our life in Peking, I am struck by one very sad thought. Of all the men that I have mentioned so far as I know not one is still alive. I alone am left, the last of the Mohicans.

So the year 1865 died, and 1866 reigned in its stead.

It does not often happen to a man to keep three new years' feasts in one year. This is what befell me at Peking. On the 1st of January at early dawn our Chinese servants came to bend the knee and wish us all happiness and prosperity; twelve days later good manners demanded that I should go and salute General Vlangaly and the good Archimandrite Palladius; and finally on Feb. 14th crackers and squibs announced the approaching birth of the Chinese new year—characters of good omen were pasted on the doorposts of the houses, from which streamers of pierced red paper fluttered like lace.

On this day it is essential that there should be much noise and popping of fireworks, for there are many demons to be exorcized, evil spirits of the past year—especially the spirit of poverty—to be driven away; on the morrow Peking must be in gala trim, and in the din and clatter of drums and tambourines and cymbals and clappers and gongs and other instruments of percussion and aural torture, there will be much joy. Outside the huge main gate there will be a great gathering in front of a small temple roofed

with yellow imperial tiles, the shrine of Kwan Ti, the God of War, where the faithful with many genuflexions and reverent bows will receive from the priest, for cash, a slip of bamboo drawn at haphazard to be exchanged for a piece of paper upon which will be inscribed the fate of the votary for the coming year. In the street of bookshops there will be a huge gathering with "all the fun of the fair," toys, quack doctors, jugglers, beggars, mountebanks, a dentist with a great store of extracted teeth, mostly sound, above all—noise! and there will be a peepshow in which all the famous places of the world will be represented, and St. Paul's Cathedral and the Bay of Naples will do duty as special features of the Liu Kiu Islands! Not so very different from the Windsor Fair of old Eton days after all! "Homo est animal bipes, implume, et cachinnans"—the same the world over.

By way of varying our amusements we managed with some difficulty to flood a small courtyard for skating. The ice never held good for long, for the dust made it impossible, and then we had to begin all over again. Once we rode out to the Summer Palace to picnic and skate upon the great lake. That was delightful. We were none of us great performers, but such as they were, our twists and turns excited the wonder of the Chinese soldiers. What amazed them above all was going backwards; that they could not understand, for although skating was part of the drill of the braves of the Tartar Banners, it was of a very elementary character: just a bone skate tied on to one foot, the other foot being used to push. I wonder what they would have said if they could have seen Mr. Grenander, or one of the great artists in patinology.

Happy as I was at Peking, and delightful as are my memories of the grim old place, I must admit that the winter was long and dreary enough. But at last one day, as M. Vlangaly and I were wandering up and down on the city wall, we spied a small, half-starved weed trying to poke its nose out of a chink between two stones. The dove was not more welcome to the Ark. It meant spring. Soon the view from the wall would undergo a transformation. First all the courtyards and gardens of the temples and dwellings of the great people would be bright and gay with the blossoms of peaches and apricots and all manner of flowering shrubs, and later on—in summer

—the huge city would be like one vast park, with here and there a patch of shabby red wall and a glimmer of yellow tiles—the Imperial colours—peeping through the wealth of greenery.

The coming of spring was all the more looked forward to by me as I had in prospect a trip to Mongolia; as a matter of fact, I made two such journeys, and very delightful they were; but of these I have written an account elsewhere.*

I passed the weeks of great heat in a temple even more delightful than that of the Azure Clouds—a monastery some twenty-three miles from Peking, very secluded, hidden among the mountains, in the midst of enchanting scenery. Ta chio ssŭ, the Temple of Great Repose, stands in a perfect nest of trees, junipers, pines, firs and poplars. Out of the living rock behind the Pavilion of the Resting Clouds a delicious fountain plays into a fern-clad pool, from which it finds its way through a succession of courtyards past the "Hall of the Four Proprieties" in which there is an Imperial throne. Could a man wish for a happier spot in which to work and dream?

Meanwhile I was under orders from the Foreign Office to leave Peking and go to Japan. At the end of September I started.

How well—let me say it again—Baroness von Heyking understood the magic of Peking and its power of fascination amid so much that is sordidly repellent! As I sadly rode out of the gate at which I had entered so full of enthusiasm some eighteen months before, I met a miserable beggar, a poor creature so filthy and degraded as to be scarcely human. Ragged and bare almost of everything save sores and clotted dirt as he was, I almost envied that unhappy wretch. He was going in, I was going out—and well I knew that never should I return.

* "The Attaché at Peking." Macmillan, 1900.

CHAPTER XVIII

1866

JAPAN

ALTHOUGH in one shape or another I have written a good deal about the Land of the Gods, I have hitherto refrained from saying much about my own personal experience in that country, or about the part which was played by Europeans, and more especially by the English Legation, during the great upheaval which resulted in the uniting as a solid nation of that Japan which for centuries had been an agglomeration of more or less independent principalities. I felt that there was much that could hardly be written without indiscretion until a considerable time should have elapsed. Now practically half a century has gone by since the curtain was rung down upon a unique and most interesting drama, and the Japanese themselves speak of the times of which I am writing as "Mukashi"—"in the days of old." One after another the actors, Japanese and Europeans alike, have disappeared, and I think that the day has come when so much as we know about what took place in a revolution which has had such far-reaching consequences ought to be recorded, if only as *matière pour servir à l'histoire.*

Moreover, lest those who travel in Japan of to-day should set me down as a second Baron von Münchhausen, I am anxious to say my say while there is yet at least one man alive who can corroborate it, or scourge me if I depart from the truth. That man is Sir Ernest Satow, my old friend and colleague, to whom it was largely due that the sun shone so brightly on my days in Japan, and that the adventurous episodes through which we lived together—troublous as they often were at the time—have remained with us only as joyous and picturesque memories for a garrulous old age.

Those who have the patience to struggle through these stories of a dead past will understand what the great Field-Marshal Prince Oyama meant when, in 1906 at an exhibition of Jujutsu at Tokio by a Japanese young lady, he turned round to me and said: "Some of that girl's tricks would have been pretty useful to you in the old days that you and I remember!"

The voyage from Shanghai to Yokohama in October, 1866, was a true harbinger of the stormy times through which I was to live for the next three or four years. We left Shanghai in the early days of October with a falling barometer, and when we got out to sea we found a typhoon in full blast. There was a fierce sea running, but the force of the wind was so great that it blew the foam like a carpet spread over the waves, so that had it not been for the tossing of the ship, we might have fancied ourselves travelling over a smooth surface. It was a wild experience, and right thankful we were, passengers and ship's crew alike, when we finally came to an anchor outside Yokohama.

My first landing in Japan was a gloomy disappointment. Could this be the fairy land of whose beauties we had heard from Sherard Osborn, Oliphant, and the earlier travellers? The sky was grey, sad, and unfriendly; gusts of wind turned umbrellas inside out and defied waterproofs. Where was Mount Fuji the peerless, the mountain of the Gods? Veiled, curtained and invisible, like the charms of an odalisque at the Sweet Waters of Europe. The low eaves of what seemed to be a custom house were mere runlets of water. Drip, drip, drip! In front of the building a number of *yakunin*, small government employés, bristling with sword and dirk, clad in sad-coloured robes with quaint lacquer hats, a mob of coolies with rain-coats made of straw, looking like animated haycocks sodden in an unpropitious season; a woman or two clattering and splashing in high wooden pattens, carrying babies sorely afflicted with skin diseases slung behind their backs—a melancholy arrival, in all truth, and sufficiently depressing. All but half a century ago!

But of such a crowd as this—bowmen, spearmen and swordsmen, for they were little more—was made up the brotherhood which in some four hundred and eighty months was to win its place in the sun, tearing to tatters China's boasted supremacy in the Far East,

sweeping a great European navy off the face of the seas, taking, not once but twice, by sheer dogged valour and patriotism, scorn of life and scorn of death, the famous citadel which men said could set at nought the science and heroism of the civilized world.

For the first two or three days, until a lair of my own could be made ready for me, Sir Harry Parkes took me in and lodged me at the Legation, a rather rickety but comfortable bungalow on the bund. The first night at dinner, perhaps owing to the dismal weather, the conversation turned upon lugubrious subjects—the anti-foreign feeling in the country; the murders of Richardson, and more recently of Baldwin and Bird; the bloodthirsty attacks upon the Legation by Rônins in the time of Sir Rutherford Alcock and Colonel Neale. After all this raw-head and bloody-bones sort of talk we went off a little dolefully to bed. In the dead of the night I was awakened by the clatter of wooden sliding doors, the rattling of glass, and the shaking of the whole bungalow—it was the din of the infernal regions. I jumped up and seizing my revolver, rushed out into the passage, quite expecting to see it full of Rônins with blades reeking gore. Full indeed the passages were—but not of Rônins; for every soul was on the alert, revolver in hand, ready for deeds of derring-do. But it was no mortal foe that was attacking us. It was an earthquake. The devils that stoke the fires of the infernal regions were at work, and we could hardly fight them with revolvers! For a few minutes it seemed as if the building must collapse like a house of cards; but it managed to hold together, and all was quiet; so we went to bed again, and when we awoke next morning the sun was shining, the mist had all faded away, the air was crisp and sharp, and the day was full of glory.

Walking out that afternoon and suddenly coming in full view of Mount Fuji, snow-capped, rearing its matchless cone heavenward in one gracefully curving slope from the sea level, I too was caught by the fever of intoxication which the day before had seemed quite inexplicable—a fever which burns to this day, and will continue to burn in my veins to the end of my life.

It so happened that during the next few days there was little work to do, and so, under the kindly guidance of my old friend Satow, I was able to wander about the neighbourhood of Yokohama,

making short excursions in the country, now in all the bravery of its autumn beauty; and what can be more lovely than those valleys with the rich cultivation below, and the hillsides covered with "the scarlet and golden tissue of the maples" fringed by graceful bamboos, standing out against the dark green pines and sombre cryptomerias? Very picturesque and attractive are the Shintō shrines, and the eaves of the little Buddhist temples peeping from among the rocks, half hidden by the varied foliage which embowers the choicest spots. It is a farmers' country, and Inari Sama, their patron god, with his attendant foxes, has his full meed of worship.

When I arrived in Japan the country was politically in a state of fever; it was on the eve of an earthquake which has upset the whole balance of the world and of which the full effects have perhaps not yet been felt. In that upheaval the European influence was a factor of which hitherto little notice has been taken, for obvious reasons; but it nevertheless played a very real and important part. In 1866 that influence resolved itself into the struggle for dominance between two men—Sir Harry Parkes and M. Léon Roches, the French Minister.

Sir Harry Parkes was certainly a very remarkable person. He was a small, wiry, fair-haired man with a great head and broad brow, almost out of proportion to his body; his energy was stupendous, he was absolutely fearless and tireless, very excitable and quick to anger. Having been sent out to China as a boy of thirteen in 1841, he learnt the language with almost superhuman industry, and was doing important work as interpreter, often in most dangerous expeditions, at an age when other boys are yet wondering whether they will ever get into the school eleven. His career in China is too well known for me to refer to it here. When he was only thirty-eight years old he was appointed Minister to Japan, and there later in the year I joined him.

He often expressed to me his regret that his education had been so early broken off. The loss weighed heavily upon him. Yet no man would have suspected him of want of literary culture. He must have created time, for busy as his life was, he had read greedily, and he often took me by surprise in unexpected ways; his great shortcoming as a diplomatist was want of knowledge of French.

M. Léon Roches, the French Minister, was a handsome swashbuckler, who had been an interpreter in the French army in Algeria. He was far more a picturesque Spahi than a diplomatist.

The ministers of the other Treaty Powers were mere cyphers. Herr von Brandt, the Prussian Minister, a man of great ability, was away at home, taking advantage of his leave to render signal service to his country during the war of 1866, for which he received the thanks of the great Bismarck. When he returned to Japan later in the revolution he too played a conspicuous part.

It is not too much to say that Parkes and Roches hated one another and were as jealous as a couple of women. In the struggle between the Daimios and the Shōgun the *beau sabreur* backed the wrong horse. Parkes had at his elbow a man of extraordinary ability in the person of Mr. Satow. He it was who swept away all the cobwebs of the old Dutch diplomacy, and by an accurate study of Japanese history and of Japanese customs and traditions, realized and gave true value to the position of the Shōgun, showing that the Mikado alone was the sovereign of Japan. Nor was this all. His really intimate knowledge of the language, combined with great tact and transparent honesty, had enabled him to establish friendly relations with most of the leading men in the country; thus, young as he was, achieving a position which was of incalculable advantage to his chief.

There was another man, Mr. Thomas Glover, a merchant at Nagasaki, who also rendered good, though hitherto unacknowledged, service in the same sense. Parkes had the wit to see the wisdom of Satow's policy and the value of his advice, and, having recognized it, he had the courage and determination to carry it into effect, giving the whole of his moral support to the Daimios, while Roches persisted in the vain endeavour to bolster up the Shōgun, whose power had dwindled away to vanishing-point.

One day Parkes came into my room like a whirlwind, his fair, reddish hair almost standing on end, as was its way when he was excited. "What is the matter, Sir Harry?" I asked. "Matter!" was the answer. "What do you think that fellow Roches has just told me? He is going to have a *mission militaire* out from France to drill the Shōgun's army! Never mind! I'll be even with him.

I'll have a *mission navale!*"—and he did. Three months later out came the *mission militaire*, with Captain Chanoine at its head—Chanoine who afterwards became famous when, as general, he was for three days War Minister, and resigned owing to the Dreyfus affair. My old friend, General Descharmes, then a captain, was the cavalry officer, and arrived with a grand piano and a whole repertoire of Beethoven, Mozart, Chopin, etc. He was a really great musician, which did not hinder him from being a first-rate soldier.* Brunet was the artilleryman; he afterwards got into a scrape by taking command in the Shōgun's army, when it made its last stand at Wakamatsu in the northern province of Aidzu. Du Bousquet represented the infantry, and became a competent Japanese scholar; Caseneuve was the fifth officer.

Not very long afterwards Captain Tracy and the *mission navale* appeared upon the scene as Parkes' counterblast.

Who could have foretold that the foundation of the marvellously successful Japanese army and navy should have had its origin in the jealousy of the English and French Ministers? It was indeed a pregnant episode, of which, so far as I know, no notice has been taken. No doubt the effect of the two missions only hurried on and brought to a head what must ultimately have taken place, although the change would have been slower, retarded perhaps for many years; for anyone who is acquainted with the Japanese character must see that once the seclusion of centuries was broken into, and the country entered into the comity of nations, the ambitious aspirations of a people so deeply moved by national sentiment would never have been satisfied with an inferior position.

Monsieur Roches had a whole network of schemes for the establishment of French monopolies—docks, harbours, arsenals and what not. But all these depended upon the permanence of the Shōgun's power. And even if that had been effected by his

* Years afterwards, when Descharmes was military attaché in London, he came to dine with us. Joachim was of the party and had brought his violin quite unexpectedly. He asked for an accompanist. I had asked no one for the purpose, little thinking that it would be required. Descharmes sat down and played the accompaniments at sight, to Joachim's amazement and great satisfaction. Both violinist and pianist are now alas! dead.

support, there would have been diplomatic wigs upon the green before he would have been able even to initiate his ambitious designs. Our chief was far too wide awake for him.

Political changes or upheavals are probably seldom or never due to one cause only. They are rather brought about by combinations in which several, or perhaps many, factors play a part. In any case, in Japan the psychological moment had arrived. The usurped rule of the Tokugawa Shōguns had wrought no little good in the country; two hundred years of peace—after centuries of internecine civil wars—were something to their credit, something for which men might well be thankful. The natural evanescence of gratitude, however, was hurried on by the despotic laws laid down by Iyémitsu, the third Shōgun of the dynasty—the grandson of its founder, Iyéyasu. Iyémitsu had been dead for a hundred and sixty years and more, and his successors, far from inheriting his masterful spirit, had lapsed into sloth and political impotence. It took some time even in those circumstances for the end to come—but it came.

It was not to be supposed that proud nobles like Satsuma, Chōshiu, Tosa, and the fabulously wealthy Kaga should remain for ever in almost servile subjection to an effete despotism under conditions which it is difficult now to realize. Why should they do homage to a ruler—at most the self-appointed vicar of their real sovereign? Why should they submit to enforced residence in his capital, leaving behind them, if they went home to their own provinces, wives and children as hostages for their return? Why should they be deprived of all voice in the affairs of their country? The thing was unthinkable.

One main cause of the fall of the Tokugawa power came from within. When Iyéyasu established his dynasty he made provision for its continuance in case the direct line of his son Hidétada should fail. He directed that in that case the Shōgun should be chosen from the descendants of his sons, the Lords of Ki, Owari, and Mito. The second of the Lords of Mito, Tokugawa Mitsukuni, who has been called the Mæcenas of Japan on account of his own scholarship and his encouragement of learning in others,*

* See Professor Longford's admirable "Story of Old Japan," p. 312.

employed a number of the best scholars of the Empire to produce the Dai Nihon Shi, the history of Japan from the days of the fabulous Jimmu Tennō down to the abdication in A.D. 1413 of the Emperor Go Komatsu. (Mr. Longford reckons him as the 99th Mikado; but the Ō Dai Ichi Ran makes him to have been the 101st.)

The book was not printed until 1857, but it was largely circulated in MSS. and so it came about that the grandson of Iyéyasu was largely responsible for the scattering broadcast of a book which, as it was written to prove the sole supremacy of the Mikado, was one of the earliest blows struck at the Shōgun's power. Nay more. By one of those coincidences in which the irony of fate reveals itself, it was upon his own descendant, Tokugawa Kéiki, the third son of a later Lord of Mito, that the final blow fell. In 1827 appeared the Nihon Gwai Shi,* "the foreign history of Japan," which is a history of the Shōgunate from its first foundation by Yoritomo in the 12th century. These books had created a ferment in the country—at least among the lettered classes—which nothing could allay, and the great nobles were ready and eager for a revolt.

Kingdoms and governments and systems wear out like old clothes, and the once glorious, trefoil-crested Jim-Baori (war surcoat) of the Tokugawa Shōgun was beginning to show many signs of wear and tear, when the arrival of Commodore Perry with four little American ships caused the beginning of the last fatal rent in its silken tissue. The Bakufu, the Government of the Shōgun, were paralysed with fear; they were at their wits' end, and when the United States commander proposed a treaty—a very modest agreement, asking nothing more than access to three harbours of refuge—they referred to Kiōto for instructions—they who were supposed to rule Kiōto—and they appealed for advice to the Daimios whom they claimed as feudal subjects. In the meantime, as a protective measure against the foreigner they called out the fire brigade of Yedo—some fifty miles away from where the western ships were lying! The ringing of those fire-bells tolled the knell of the Shōgun's power. Commodore Perry quickly

* See Mr. Longford *ut supra*.

sailed away, saying that he would come back in a year for an answer; when he returned his modest little treaty was at his command. In 1858 Lord Elgin and Baron Gros concluded the first substantial treaties opening the country to foreign trade.

These few lines seem indispensable for an understanding of what was to take place in 1867 and 1868. Those who wish for details must be referred to the histories of Sir F. O. Adams and Professor Longford.

To return to my own story. A week had hardly passed away from my first landing in Yokohama when I was installed in what seemed to me the daintiest little cottage in the world. It was built of fair white wood and paper, not much bigger than a doll's house, and quite as flimsy; it had a tiny verandah, decked out with half a dozen dwarf trees, looking on to a miniature garden about the size of an Arab's prayer carpet, and was one of a group of three such dwellings, the other two being occupied by Mr. Satow and Dr. Willis—so we formed a small Legation colony on the outskirts of the native town. It was all on so miniature a scale that it seemed as if one must have shrunken and shrivelled up in order to fit oneself to it. As for Willis who, dear man, was a giant, how he got into his house and how, once in, he ever got out again remained as big a mystery as that of the apple in the dumpling.

Of course we had a house-warming—also on a miniature scale—with an officer or two of the 9th Regiment as guests, and three or four winsome geishas to sing and dance for us. So with *Wein, Weib und Gesang*, and a supper of rice and mysterious dishes of fish and bean curd, sent in by a Japanese cook-shop, we spent a very merry evening. It was midnight when the little maids, with great reverence and many knockings of their pretty heads upon the mats, took their leave, and my first Japanese party came to an end. The whole cost, including music and dancing, came to a little over a dollar a head. I don't suppose that in these improved days you could do it for four or five times the money.

Our little colony was fated to have but a short span of life. On the 26th of November I was aroused by a violent gale which blew in one of the shutters of my home. I got up, but unfortunately did not dress at once, as I wanted to arrange my furniture,

part of which had only been sent in the evening before. As I was shaving my Chinese servant came and told me that there was a fire two-thirds of a mile off. "All right," I said. "When I am dressed I will go and see it." Little did I know of the rapidity of flames in a native town. By the time I had shaved I saw that there would be just time to huddle on a pair of trousers and a pea-jacket. The fire, driven by the raging wind, seemed to be all round me. I rushed from the house followed by my dog, who, poor beast! bewildered by the noise and the crowd, bolted back again into the furnace, where I found his charred bones the next day under the ashes of a clothes cupboard, to which he had evidently fled for shelter. In an hour or a little more nothing was left of the Japanese quarter in which we lived. The wind howled and whistled. The flames leapt from roof to roof, the burning wooden shingles, driven, as it seemed, for a couple of hundred yards finding fresh food for their insatiable greed. There was no crashing noise of falling timbers such as one hears in a London fire. The flames passed over the houses and simply devoured them like gun-cotton passed through a burning candle—a wonderful and appalling sight. In a few minutes of what had been teeming human homes nothing remained but a heap of ashes and a few red-hot tiles.

Nothing could cope with the fierceness of the attack. The European quarter was soon under the curse. Stone houses—warehouses supposed to be fireproof—were of no avail. Had not the wind abated towards the afternoon nothing would have remained. As it was, about one third of the foreign buildings was destroyed. It was the swiftness of the blow that was so terrifying; it showed how in a great town like Yedo whole quarters, a mile or two square of houses that are just tinder, may be eaten up by fire in a few hours.

There was much loss of life. The next day close to where my house had stood I saw a piteous row of corpses charred so that their humanity was hardly to be recognized, and was told that this was but one of many such rows. The victims were chiefly women from the Gankiro where the fire broke out. One partially burned body was found in a well into which in her agony a poor girl had leaped.

My possessions consisted of the pea-jacket, singlet, trousers, shoes and socks in which I stood; but those who had been spared were very kind to us. The good English Admiral, Sir George King, sent me six shirts with a letter which I treasure.

In the meantime Sir Harry Parkes had made up his mind that he would once more insist upon taking up his residence in Yedo, which had been abandoned on account of the attacks upon the Legation in Alcock's time and when Neale was *chargé d'affaires* —attacks culminating in the destruction by Rônin of the buildings which were in course of erection at Goten Yama, a hill above the ill-famed borough of Shinagawa, a very pretty spot, which the Shōgun had assigned as a site for the foreign Legations. It was a matter of common talk that Prince Ito in his salad days was one of that body of Rônin; we often used to chaff him about it in old times before he became such a great man, but when he was already a good friend of ours, and he never denied it—but only laughed.

One morning Parkes sent for me to talk the matter over. He argued, and I quite agreed with him, that it was a most undignified and anomalous position for an English Minister accredited to a so-called friendly country practically to waive the right of residence in what, if not the true capital of that country, was, at any rate, at the moment the seat of Government. And so to Yedo we went, remaining only a few days at first in order to make ready for our permament abode there. This was in the early part of November, a few days before the great fire at Yokohama.

The buildings which we were to occupy were two long, low, ramshackle bungalows, the one for the Minister, the other for the rest of us, in a court below the famous temple of Sengakuji—where the forty-seven Rônin* are buried. At the gate was an out-building occupied by a guard of the 9th Regiment, now the Norfolks, from Yokohama. It must seem almost incredible to the Japanese of the present day to think of Yokohama being guarded by a British infantry regiment, quartered in barracks on the bluff above the town! And this a little less than fifty years ago!

* See my "Tales of Old Japan."

In addition to the English soldiers we had a large guard of Bettégumi, a corps of Samurai of a rather humble class specially raised for the protection of foreign officials, but who were far more concerned with spying upon us than fighting for us. Never was espionage carried out in such perfection as it was in Japan, where in the days of the Bakufu it attained the dignity of a fine art. No native official, whatever his rank might be, went forth on his business alone. An *ométsuké*, the "eye in attendance," stuck to him like his shadow. No man was trusted, and it is not to be wondered at that we also should have been unable to move a step without our "eyes in attendance."

The bungalow barracks under Sengakuji furnished a miserable lodging—neither doors, windows nor shutters fitted; there were a few stoves, which either got red-hot and smelt of burning iron, or gave no heat at all. The wind whistled unhindered through long passages and chilly rooms, so that it almost seemed as if we should be better off in the open, where, at any rate, there would be no draughts.

On that first evening there was no temptation to sit up late; shivering and shaking, we went to bed very early, but it was long before even a pile of blankets could bring enough warmth to enable me to sleep. While it was yet quite dark, and as it seemed to me the middle of the night, I was awakened by a bugle-call. I jumped up and ran, pistol in hand, formidable, breathing bloody vengeance, as I did at Yokohama when the earth quaked, to the verandah to see what was the terrible danger—hailed the sentry outside. "What is the matter?" "Please, sir, it's only the rewelly." Relieved, I crept back into the warmth of my nest.

What with the discomfort of the buildings, the sensation of being closely guarded, and the inquisitive watchfulness of the Bettégumi, we felt as if we were in prison, and so Satow and myself begged Sir Harry to allow us to hire a little temple outside. Our chief jumped at the idea, for he was naturally anxious to do everything that would tend to break the spell of lack of freedom which he rightly felt to be most detrimental to any real intercourse with Japan. So Mr. Satow and I rented Monriuin, a delicious little shrine a few hundred yards from the Legation, on a tiny hill

commanding a lovely view over the bay of Yedo; we were the first foreigners to live out of bounds in that great city. From the Bettégumi there was no escape—not even for an afternoon's walk, or to go across to the Legation. Otherwise we were free, we could hold intercourse with natives, and if we heard the "rewelly" it was softened by distance. Forty years afterwards I went back to Japan, and of course wished to visit the old place. Alas! Evil times had fallen upon the monks: the dainty little dwelling was all rack and ruin, the trim garden a wilderness of unwholesome weeds. It was a piteous sight.

We mounted our little *ménage* very frugally. In order to save the expense of a cook, a *batterie de cuisine*, knives and forks, etc., we got our dinner sent in from a Japanese cookshop; with rice and fish we did well enough—adding now and then a little dish of chicken or duck. But there came a day when the weather, having been too bad for the fishermen to go out, our restaurateur with many apologies sent us a dinner of bamboo shoots and sea-weed. That was a *jour maigre* with a vengeance.

From that time forth it will be seen that Satow and I hunted very much in couples. I was nominally the senior and had to draw up the reports of our proceedings, but I may say once for all that his was the brain which was responsible for the work which I recorded. It is difficult to exaggerate the services which he rendered in very critical times, and it is right that this should not be forgotten.

It was well that we had made arrangements for settling the Legation at Yedo, for in the last days of December the Legation house at Yokohama was burnt down. As the Japanese in their letter of condolence to Sir Harry expressed it, "the calamity of the dancing horse" had once more made itself felt.*

* This is borrowed from the Chinese classics; it seems that in the days of the Sung dynasty in China a tower called "the Tower of the Dancing Horse" was burnt down, since which time a great fire is called after it.

CHAPTER XIX

THE SHŌGUN OR TYCOON

IN the beginning of 1867 there was a great stir in Japanese politics, and it was evident to those who, like ourselves, were more or less behind the scenes that we were on the eve of what might prove to be a critical state of affairs whichever party gained the upper hand. Meanwhile the Shōgun Iyémochi had died on the 19th of September, 1866, and Tokugawa Kéiki, who, as I have already said, was the third son of the Lord of Mito and whose rise was due to the intrigues of his father, succeeded to the office; he soon announced his intention of receiving the foreign ministers at Ōsaka, an ugly city of rivers and canals, a great and important trade centre, but with no claim other than its waterways to be called, as it sometimes was, the Venice of the Far East. In the first week of February Mr. Satow and myself were sent in a man-of-war to make the necessary arrangements and settle all the questions of etiquette and procedure which might crop up. We had with us as guests Captain Cardew of the 9th Regiment and Lieutenant Thalbitzer of the Danish Navy.

We landed at Hiōgo and rode to Ōsaka. Besides a mounted escort of officers soldiers were posted at intervals all along the road, and as we passed each post the men fell in and followed behind us, so that by the time we reached our destination we had a tail of between two and three thousand men. This was pretty good evidence of the anxiety of the Government for our safety.

On landing we heard that the Mikado Komei had died of small-pox on the 3rd of February—as a matter of fact he had died on the 30th of January, but for some mysterious reason the date was

given as four days later. His successor, the famous Emperor Mutsu Hito, was then a boy of fifteen. Those who knew him had great faith in his ability and predicted great things for him if he should be properly trained. Their forecast was well justified. Had the Emperor Komei, who was a deadly foe to all foreign intercourse, lived the events of the next few months must have been very different.

When we reached Ōsaka we found that a pretty little shrine in a street more or less devoted to temples had been prepared for our reception. We were feasted and treated right royally, and everything was done to make our duties easy and our stay agreeable. It will astonish the tourist of to-day to hear that we were looked upon as such curiosities that the street in which we lived was so crowded with sightseers as to be almost impassable and the hucksters and costers of Ōsaka set up a fair outside our temple, where they did a roaring trade in fruit, sweetmeats, cheap toys and the like.

Although our mission to Ōsaka was nominally intended to arrange the ceremonial to be observed at the approaching reception by the Tycoon of the Foreign Representatives, and especially of Sir Harry Parkes, it gave an excellent opportunity for obtaining information as to the political situation in Kiōto. It was during this visit that I first made acquaintance with some of the leading men of the clans—men who were destined to play a great part in the days that were to follow. We were visited by representatives of both the rival parties, that of the discontented Daimios and that of the Tycoon. Foremost among the latter were some of the northerners of Aidzu, men who were ready to lay down their lives, and did actually die, for the honour of the Tokugawa; others from the Satsuma, Chōshiu, Tosa and Uwajima clans were moving heaven and earth for the deposition of the Shōgun.

We learned much about the intrigues that were going on at Kiōto, plots and counterplots of which the interest has long since faded away owing to the very greatness of the results which have issued from them. The men themselves who kept us so well informed have almost all, one by one, been gathered to their fathers. Komatsu of the Satsuma clan, whom we saw almost daily during

our stay in Ōsaka, Prince Ito of the Chōshiu clan, Kido of the same clan, the most brilliant of all—Gotō of Tosa whose statue stands in Tokio, Nakai, and others all gone! The last of our special friends, Marquis Inouyé, one of the elder statesmen, died a month since. I doubt whether there can be six men alive who played a leading part in those stirring events. And during the last twelve months the great Mikado, whose reign will always be so famous, and the Shōgun whom he magnanimously forgave, have themselves gone to the realm of shadows, living only in history.

We had to be very careful in arranging our interviews, for naturally we were pretty closely watched by the blessed spies who were attached to us "for our protection." Still we did manage once or twice to escape from the Argus-eyed and to have at least two interviews from which even the less important men of the Daimio party were shut out.

One message which I was desired to give to Sir Harry Parkes was, read by the light of subsequent events, supremely interesting. It was to the effect that the object of the Prince of Satsuma and of the coalition of Daimios was not to upset the government of the Shōgun, but to prevent it from making a bad use of its powers. That Satsuma hoped to see the Mikado restored to the ancient honours of his race, because that would contribute to the weal of the country; that their plans and hopes all tended not to revolution against the Shōgun but to the benefit of the country at large —that if Sir Harry, on reaching Ōsaka, would moot the question of a new treaty with the Mikado direct, the Daimios would at once give their adherence to the proposal and flock to Kiōto to carry out this great work. Let Sir Harry help them to this very small degree and they would answer for the rest.

Truly a modest programme; but *l'appétit vient en mangeant;* a few short months later it would have excited ridicule.

We did a great deal of shopping during our stay in Ōsaka, for, of course, we wished to carry away some of the *mei-butsu*, special wares, for which the great city was famous. Lacquer, quaint pipes of many patterns, fans, and brocade were temptations not to be resisted. Wherever we went we were pursued by huge crowds

through which a way was cleared for us by petty officials, armed only with the *Wakizashi* or dirk, who kept shouting a sort of crow-like cry of *Kan ! Kan !* But the mob, friendly but very persistent, was not to be shouted away. The attraction was too great.

When, after having fulfilled our mission at Ōsaka, we reached Yedo we found that a tragedy had taken place in the Legation during our absence. There were a good many men who were unable to get over the constant dread of murder at the hands of the armed swashbucklers who used to ruffle along the streets of Yedo, scowling at the hated foreigners and sometimes making as though they would draw their keen heavy swords, to deliver that first deadly blow which would cut a man almost from shoulder to waist—a blow so well known that we were advised if we saw an inch of steel bared to shoot the ruffian at sight. One of our young student interpreters was so possessed by the terror which haunted him by day and by night that he never went outside the gates of the Legation and even petitioned the Chief to send home for a couple of Armstrong guns for our better protection, though we already had a company of the 9th and our mounted escort.

One night the poor fellow could stand it no longer. He dined quietly with the others and then went off to his room. Two shots were heard. His hand must have trembled, for he missed himself with the first, the bullet of which was found in the wall; the second shot was fatal. They say that suicide is infectious; within a week there were two more cases in Yokohama. It is hard to realize nowadays the conditions of life in the early times of our intercourse with Japan. For nearly four years I never wrote a note without having a revolver on the table, and never went to bed without a Spencer rifle and bayonet at my hand. Think of that, you who walk through the streets of Yedo and Kiōto, swinging a dandy cane with as great safety as you would in Regent Street or Piccadilly, and thank your stars that the carrying of sword and dirk has been abolished by law.

In the month of May, 1867, Sir Harry Parkes and the rest of us went to Ōsaka for the first reception by the Shōgun.

The Castle of Ōsaka was, and still is, so far as its outer fortress is concerned, a most stupendous monument of feudalism, the

crowning glory of Hidéyoshi, commonly spoken of as Taiko Sama, the son of a woodcutter in the province of Owari, who, towards the end of the sixteenth century, became the supreme *de facto* ruler of Japan and the conquerer of Corea. Its walls, "seven fathoms thick," as old Kämpfer puts it, were built of great blocks of granite piled irregularly one above the other without mortar in cyclopean pattern or rather no pattern, massive, wonder-raising. Walls moated by two rivers, the Yodo and the Kashiwari. Some of the stones are more than thirty feet long and nearly twenty feet high, sent, as it is said, by way of tribute by the lords of many provinces. It is a noble structure, moated, very plain and simple, featureless with the exception of the curved roofs of the great towers, its very simplicity adding to its grandeur; against a host armed with bows and spears, with perhaps a few matchlocks, an impregnable fortress. Here Hidéyori, the son of Hidéyoshi, was born, and here he lived with his mother, a woman of great character, in full security, and for a while in friendship with Iyéyasu. The end of that friendship and the fall of the castle of Ōsaka rank among the romances of history.

Over and over again the great stronghold was attacked by the Tokugawa; twice it was nearly lost by treachery—but the garrison always beat off their assailants, until at last a fire broke out within the castle and there was a panic. Hidéyori and his gloriously brave mother were never seen again: they must have perished in the flames; and Iyéyasu triumphed only to die some months afterwards from the effects of a wound received during the siege. After his death he was deified, or perhaps I should rather say canonized, as an incarnation of Buddha under the title of Gongen Sama.

It was in this great historic castle that our reception by the Shōgun took place. Never can anything of the kind be seen again. The Shōgunate has disappeared and is now only spoken of in Japan as something prehistoric; the last of the Shōguns died a few months ago; the castle itself no longer exists as it then was. The outer shell still stands but the magnificent palace which it contained was gutted and burnt by the Shōgun's own people when, after the battle of Fushimi they came back in bitter despair,

aching with the pain of defeat, and many of them stung to the quick by the flight of their lord.

How cruelly this sorrow ate into the hearts of the faithful retainers and adherents of the great House of Tokugawa may be felt from the following true story. I am anticipating by a year, but I am not writing a consecutive history; only jotting down stray notes of a sort of "voyage en zigzag" across my memory. When the defeated Shōgun reached Yedo and was safely lodged (for a short while!) in his ancestral castle, a member of his second Council, one Hori Kura no Kami, went to him and urged him to perform *hara-kiri* as the only way to wipe out the stain which had smirched the august Family. To prove his sincerity he declared himself ready to do the same. The Shōgun is reported to have laughed at him, saying that such barbarous customs were out of date. Upon this Hori Kura no Kami prostrated himself, making due obeisances and retiring to an adjoining chamber, stripped to the waist, drew his dirk, and plunging it into himself died the death of a noble samurai.

Tokugawa Kéiki was wrong when he said that *hara-kiri* was out of date as a barbarous custom. It is to this day the end of constancy and honour; witness the death of the great Satsuma General Saigo, whom I knew well, in the rebellion of 1877; witness the self-immolation of my gallant old friend, General Nogi, the hero of Port Arthur, two years ago (in 1913); broken by grief at the death of the Mikado Mutsu Hito he would not outlive the master whom he loved, and so he died, and that faithful lady his wife died with him.

During our stay at Ōsaka we had three interviews with the Shōgun; of these the first was naturally the most interesting, although it was only semi-official, for not only had it the taste of novelty, but it also afforded the opportunity for a more intimate interchange of ideas than would be possible on a state occasion. Accompanied by a number of dignitaries of the Shōgun's government and escorted not only by our own men, seventeen splendid Lancers picked from the Metropolitan Police, and a company of the 9th Regiment, but also by a small army of Japanese soldiers, we rode to the castle in solemn procession. We were privileged

to remain on horseback beyond the place where all Japanese, high and low, were required to dismount, and only left our horses at an inner gate, immediately opposite the enormous hall of the palace, which was, indeed, an inner castle surrounded, as was the outer one, by a moat. Here we were received by a number of officials of high rank, who led us to a waiting-room where tea and various dainties were served. I take the account of our reception from a letter which I wrote at the time, on May the 6th, 1867.

The interior of the palace was far more magnificent than anything that I had seen in Japan. The walls were covered with gold leaf, decorated with those glorious paintings of trees, flowers, birds and beasts, for which the Kano school of artists is famous. The hangings were the finest rush mats, suspended by gilt hooks from which hung huge silken tassels in tricolour—orange, red and black—the colours of the Zingari ribbon. The upper panels formed a frieze, deeply carved by some native Grinling Gibbons in the highest style of Japanese art, lavishly gilt and painted; every panel was different, no two alike. Peacocks and cranes strutting in all the pride of beauty, delicate groups of tender-coloured azaleas, bamboos bending their graceful feathers to the wind, pine trees with foliage almost black with age, were the subjects chosen. The uprights and cross-beams were of plain unpolished keaki wood, fastened with metal bolts, capped with niello work. The ceiling was coffered in squares, carved, gilt and painted, and the divisions were richly lacquered in black and gold. Sumptuous as it all was there was nothing tawdry or glaring in this fever of splendour, for it was all two hundred years old, softened and subdued by the patina of time.

If old Kämpfer's account, or rather, the story told by his informant, was correct, there once stood inside the palace precincts a tower "several stories high, whose innermost roof is covered and adorned with two monstrous large fish, which, instead of scales, are covered with golden obang, finely polished, which, on a clear, sunshiny day reflect the rays so strongly that they may be seen as far as Hiōgo. This tower was burned down about thirty years ago, to compute from 1691." These monstrous fishes were examples of the mystic Shachihoko, which are seen on so many roofs, and the obang was the great oval gold coin, some five or

six inches long, flat like a scale, which must have made a rare jacket for a fish.

We were kept some little time in the first room talking with the various dignitaries, as is natural in every land, about the weather, and then we were led into the reception hall, where, in deference to European habits, a table was set out with eight seats, and at one end a richly lacquered chair for the Shōgun. Here we were met by the Gorôjiu (the Council of State, literally " Elders "), and the members of the Second Council, and were told that the great Prince would immediately make his appearance.

A few seconds afterwards two of the tall sliding screens which wall a Japanese room were slowly and noiselessly drawn aside, and that long-drawn " hush " caused by the drawing-in of breath which announces the coming of a great personage thrilled all through the whole palace like the most delicate *pianissimo* of a huge orchestra ; for a second or two the Tycoon, motionless as a statue, stood framed in the opening between the screens, an august and imposing figure. All the Japanese prostrated themselves, with the exception of the Gorôjiu and the members of the Second Council, who, presumably, only were excused this reverence in order that there might be no difference between them and us. The great man stepped into the room, bowed, shook hands with Sir Harry Parkes " in barbarum," as Tacitus puts it, and we all sat down—four Japanese on one side of the table, Sir Harry, Mr. Locock, Mr. Satow and myself on the other. Then the Shōgun rose very gracefully and asked after the health of Queen Victoria. This was responded to by Sir Harry standing and inquiring after the Mikado. He then led the conversation into business questions.

The great man, in the course of this unofficial and more or less confidential talk, showed that he was well posted as to all that had taken place during the early days after the signing of the Elgin Treaty and up to the then present time. He spoke frankly and without reserve of the troublous years that we had gone through. He deplored the difficulties which had stood in the way of any satisfactory intercourse between his countrymen and ours, and announced his determination to inaugurate a better order of things. His manner was quite charming. He was at first, not

unnaturally, a little shy and nervous, for he had some awkward admissions to make, but his great natural distinction and kindly courtesy soon shook off all restraint, and he talked freely and easily.

Certainly Prince Tokugawa Kéiki, the last of the Shōguns, was a very striking personality. He was of average Japanese height, small as compared with Europeans, but the old Japanese robes made the difference less apparent. I think he was the handsomest man, according to our ideas, that I saw during all the years that I was in Japan. His features were regular, his eye brilliantly lighted and keen, his complexion a clear, healthy olive colour. The mouth was very firm, but his expression when he smiled was gentle and singularly winning. His frame was well-knit and strong, the figure of a man of great activity; an indefatigable horseman, as inured to weather as an English master of hounds. When I saw him again forty years later age had altered him but little. He had retained all his charm of manner, and though the face was lined his features had undergone hardly any change, and the distinction of race was as evident as ever. He was a great noble if ever there was one. The pity of it was that he was an anachronism.

After about an hour spent in very friendly conversation the Shōgun asked to see our escort, who were waiting in an inner court of the palace. They showed him lance and sword exercise, with which he seemed highly delighted, but what interested him the most was the size of our horses, Gulf Arabs, rather a good-looking lot which we had imported from India, and he, as a horse-lover, commented a good deal upon their superiority to the Japanese native ponies, which certainly are about as mean a breed of the genus horse as exists anywhere.

The Shōgun had invited us to stay for dinner. In these days (1915) a banquet served in the French fashion in the palace of a Japanese grandee is an everyday affair, but at the time of which I am writing for four Englishmen to find themselves hobnobbing with the Tycoon and his Gorôjiu was an unprecedented occurrence, impossible anywhere out of dreamland. The great man presided, and we were waited upon by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and the pages of honour. In the middle of dinner the Shōgun rose and

proposed the Queen's health, a compliment till then absolutely unknown in the Land of Sunrise, and therefore all the more indicative of the desire to please. Sir Harry responded with a toast in honour of our host. After dinner we adjourned into an inner room where the Shōgun gave each of us a present of two pieces of crape, and a pipe and tobacco-pouch of silk embroidered by the ladies of the palace.

But the prettiest compliment, so gracefully offered, was yet to come. The room in which we were was hung round with a number of portraits of poets and poetesses which had been presented to one of the Tokugawa Shōguns by some Daimio about two hundred years before. We were looking at these with no little curiosity when the Tycoon insisted on having one of them taken down and presenting it to Sir Harry in memory of his visit. Sir Harry naturally demurred to accepting it, pointing out what a pity it would be to break the set; but the Prince would take no denial, saying that "when he looked on the vacant space it would give him pleasure to think that the picture that had once filled it was in the possession of the British Minister." Could courtesy find a higher expression?

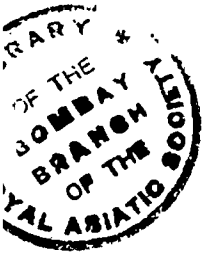
We remained at the palace till past nine o'clock and it was a satisfaction to hear next day that the occasion of his first introduction to Englishmen had afforded our princely host as much pleasure as it had given us.

The State ceremony was, of course, far more stiff and formal, but it was also infinitely more quaint, for there was no taste of Europe about it. We were living through a chapter, or perhaps I should rather say a paragraph of a chapter, taken out of the old-world romance of the furthest East. The Shōgun and his nobles were clad in the immemorial Court dress; flowing trousers as long as the train of a Buckingham Palace great lady, loose hempen jackets, and the curious little black lacquer caps like boxes (*yéboshi*) on their heads. You may see them portrayed on golden screens and old paintings. In no country that I have seen is Court dress triumphant in beauty, but here it was absolutely grotesque, forcing the wearers into the most ungraceful shuffling movements. I have no doubt that we seemed equally absurd to our hosts, for

the cocked hat, now the coveted privilege of every Japanese official, was then a mystery unknown as the future which has given birth to it.

On the following day the Shōgun returned to Kioto for a meeting of Daimios whom he had summoned to confer upon the affairs of the Empire. Meanwhile our negotiations had gone smoothly; the great man had shown himself to be most friendly, and we were in high hopes that the opening of Ōsaka in the following January would be the harbinger of new and happier relations between Japan and the Western world.

There was a talk of my being removed from Japan at this time. I was very unwilling to leave the country at so interesting a moment. In a letter written home I find the reason of my reluctance. "If I go I shall miss the opening of Ōsaka and Hiōgo to foreign trade which will be the *last event of political importance in Japan* in our time." What a blind prophet! I stayed on, but I was fated to see a good many events of greater "political importance" than the opening of the two ports.



END OF VOLUME I

Printed at The Chapel River Press, Kingston, Surrey.

00025509

Digitized with financial assistance from

H T Parekh FOUNDATION

An Initiative by HDFC

WITH YOU, RIGHT THROUGH

on 15 October, 2018